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From Prodigy to Pathology: "Monstrosity" in the British Novel from 1850 to 1930

Terri Beth Miller
University of Tennessee - Knoxville, tmille18@utk.edu

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Terri Beth Miller entitled "From Prodigy to Pathology: "Monstrosity" in the British Novel from 1850 to 1930." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

Urmila Seshagiri, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Stanton B. Garner Jr., Amy Elias, Bryant Creel

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

From Prodigy to Pathology:
"Monstrosity" in the British Novel from 1850 to 1930

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my mother and travel companion, Linda Miller. Thank you for this incredible journey.

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Abstract

In this project, I explore cultural representations of aberrant embodiment, society's monsters, to assess the sociopolitical implications of corporeal deviance. I contend that imaginative literature participates in the re/construction of monstrous bodies as an element of a larger social process of individuation and communal boundary-making, the defining of self and community through exclusionary practices embedded in the body. By situating Victorian and modernist British novels in dialog with one another, I chart a trajectory in cultural understandings of embodied deviance that moves "from prodigy to pathology." The change occurs, I argue, because the rise of modern medical practices ultimately constitutes the "domestication" of the monster, rendering it knowable, predictable, and containable within the boundaries of the diagnostic paradigm. Whereas the monster in Victorian fiction presents an ambivalent figure, both threatening and alluring, in modernism, the monster has been rendered largely performative and instrumental, the product of its pathologization by scientific discourse.

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Introduction:
From Prodigy to Pathology

All living souls welcome whatever they are ready to cope with; all else they ignore, or pronounce to be monstrous and wrong, or deny to be possible.
George Santayana

I have seen no more evident monstrosity and miracle in the world than myself.
Michel de Montaigne

This text centers upon the study of human "monsters," those beings who, in the radical singularity of their bodies (and, sometimes, their minds) call into question both the status of their own humanity and the limits of the human within us all. Within this context, the term "monstrous" will be used to denote those bodies which, by virtue of a perceived physical, sexual, racial, or psychological difference have been discursively, ideologically, and politically situated outside of an imagined norm that is itself highly contextual and contingent, but which derives its power and its authority through the construction of a monstrous[1] other. A core premise of this analysis derives from a founding principle of feminist, post-colonial, and disability studies: that material bodies are at once the substance and the product of ideological construction, the corporeal manifestation of and rationalization for the cultural metanarratives upon which hierarchical norms, values, and power structures are based, as well as the potential and actual sites for the interrogation and contestation of these hegemonic paradigms. As both flesh and discourse, then, bodies function within the social space as the occasion for and outcome of narrative. Within this context, non-normative bodies occupy a unique position in that they at once validate and frustrate the discursive paradigms into which they come, eliciting the normativizing parables seeking to construct and contain the normative subject while also embodying the subversion of that norm, the ever-present reality of the body's refusal to be circumscribed by natural laws and the social order ostensibly dependent upon and authorized by such laws.

[1] I use this term specifically signify those bodies which are perceived to be in some way singular, non-normative, extraordinary, aberrant, or deviant in reference to paradigms of the "normal."

The nexus between body and discourse lies at the heart of this study, then, insofar as the following chapters will highlight and problematize the dialectical networks connecting cultural production with empirical inquiry. Specifically, this analysis will center upon the complex, fluid, and interdependent relationships between literature and science from the high Victorian to the high modernist eras. The centrality of literature to this study derives from the premise that singular embodiments have long occupied a pivotal role in narrative but that the function of such non-normative characters had received relatively little attention prior to the advent of disability studies in the late twentieth century. As David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder note

> [D]isability pervades literary narrative, first, as a stock feature of characterization and, second, as an opportunistic metaphorical device…a primary impetus of the storyteller's efforts….[and] a metaphorical signifier of social and individual collapse. (par. 2)

The role of the extraordinary body in authorizing narrative while materializing individual and collective anxieties, questions, and concerns is nevertheless coupled with an attendant obfuscation of the political and ideological valences of such representations. Mitchell and Snyder argue that, despite the non-normative subject's being a principal locus of attention, literary representations "rarely take up disability as an experience of social or political dimensions" (Ibid.). This erasure of the social and political realities of non-normative figures reifies the position of the singularly embodied subject as narrative construct, an idea and an ideology which renders the material presence of such subjects particularly threatening, taboo, and transgressive.

My focus in this analysis on the intersections between culture and science seeks to restore the social and political valences obscured in literary representations of monstrous bodies. This study will center upon representations of aberrant bodies in the British novel from 1850 to 1930, taking as its subject canonical and non-canonical texts from the high Victorian, fin-de-siècle, and modernist periods. The scope of this study coincides with what has been widely recognized as

the period in which the modern professional sciences, as we understand them today, began to emerge. As will be shown in the following chapters, the mid-nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries saw not only the ascendance of clinical medicine and of a discrete, though not uncontested, medicalized culture, but also the advent of the modern biological sciences, the rise of professional psychiatry, and the solidifying of the marriage between social engineering programs and the emergence of governing bodies populated by a meritocracy of experts and specialists[2]. The analyses in the following chapters of works by Dickens, Stoker, Stevenson, Joyce, and Woolf will highlight the dynamic relationships between the evolution of the modern professional sciences and literary production within the context of the extraordinary body. As will be shown, orientations toward and the understanding of non-normative bodies derive from the body's status as both material and discourse, matter and story. In the chapters that follow, then, I will examine the unique subject positions of material bodies at various historical moments and in an array of contexts, from the mid-century freak show to the drawing-room exhibition of prodigies in the Victorian era and from late-century case histories of hysteria and "double-consciousness" to post-World War I images of the mutilated bodies of veterans and the eugenics films which sought to perfect and preserve the health of the British "race." In keeping with the premise of the dialectical relationship between literary representation and its socio-political context, I will position my efforts to historicize non-normative bodies alongside analyses of their

[2] To be certain, the divesting of such power into the hands of an elite few is not new or unique to this era. What is significant, however, is the emergence of a professional elite who, by virtue of highly specialized training, as opposed to economic affluence or inherited social status, garnered the right to assess and direct public policy. For the first time, it was trained experts, especially scientists and physicians, in whom the power to define and to direct the fate of the nation principally rested, not in the titled gentlemen and wealthy landowners of old.

representation in narrative, exploring the various strategies by which authors reflect, problematize, shape, and subvert social[3] orientations toward embodied aberration.

As such, this study will constitute only one small step in a tradition of exploring, analyzing, and assessing superlative bodies that dates back thousands of years. The ancient Greeks variously defined "monstrous" bodies as the rare but predictable operation of the natural order[4] and as indexes of racial difference,[5] while in the Dark Ages and the medieval period, singular embodiments were read as the markers of original sin,[6] portents of divine judgment,[7] as the hallmark of the wondrous variety of creation, or as the material manifestation of parental immorality.

It is no coincidence, then, that the term "monster" derives from the Latin *monstrum*, meaning "to show," and *monere*, meaning both "to warn" and "to instruct." The vast and varied connotations of the monstrous body, its unique status as a sliding signifier, are as ancient as they are universal. Representations of extraordinary bodies in the Classical and medieval periods enable us to illuminate the potent power of physical difference in shaping, affirming, and unsettling boundaries. The wide-ranging and frequently contradictory interpretations of aberrant embodiments exemplify the ontological uncertainty inherent in non-normative flesh, the material disruptions of the "rules" of the flesh calling forth a host of pervasive but often submerged and subliminal anxieties and uncertainties surrounding the nature of one's self and one's world. In *Embodying the Monster: Encounters with the Vulnerable Self*, Margrit Shildrick writes

[3] Obviously, this study will focus in particular on medico-scientific readings of the extraordinary body and on literature's role within this field, participating in, advancing, and, often, resisting or redefining medico-scientific narratives.

[4] This is explored with particular breadth in Aristotle's "On the Generation of Animals."

[5] Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, in which he describes the various "monstrous races" which reside at the far edges of the known world, is an important example.

[6] This includes, most notably, St. Augustine of Hippo's writings in the 4th century A.D. on the humanity of monstrous beings, their capacity for rational thought and, by extension, their eligibility to receive the sacraments.

[7] Within this context, the birth of an extraordinarily embodied child could be taken either as a sign of divine chastisement or of God's favor.

> It is not simply that monsters—strangers in general—disrupt the usual rules of interaction in that their cultural distance may be offset by physical proximity, but that they may not be outside at all. Although they are always there in our conscious appraisal of the external world, they are also the other within. In seeking confirmation of our own secure subjecthood in what we are not, what we see mirrored in the monster are the leaks and flows, the vulnerabilities in our own embodied being. Monsters, then, are deeply disturbing; neither good nor evil, inside nor outside, not self or other. On the contrary, they are always liminal, refusing to stay in place, transgressive and transformative. They disrupt both internal and external order, and overturn the distinctions that set out the limits of the human subject. (4)

This study takes as its foundation the premise of the liminality of the monstrous, the unboundedness of the extraordinary body which renders it at once heavy with signification and void of intrinsic meaning. The monstrous body, within this context, is a blank slate upon which communities and selves write their own narratives, inevitably autobiographical, while simultaneously confronted in the transgressive materiality of the monstrous body with the failures of discourse, the collapse of narrative in the presence of bodies that defy inscription and exceed the logic of language.

While much important work has already been done on the significance and representation of extraordinary bodies in the Classical and medieval periods, the focus in this analysis on representations of singular embodiment in modernity seeks to identify and explore an important shift in orientations toward normative and non-normative bodies. Specifically, this analysis will foreground the discursive and ideological foundations which have always operated to construct, describe, and condition the singular subject. The special interest within this text of the position and status of the singular body between 1850 and 1930 is predicated upon the premise of a significant and influential shift in orientations toward aberrant embodiments since the

Enlightenment—a shift away from the mythopoeic and theological and toward positivist rationalism.

While efforts to empirically assess, describe, and classify deviant bodies are as old as antiquity itself, the Enlightenment "dare to know" ethos inspired a taxonomic zeal in which the collection and categorization of monstrous bodies assumed new and profound resonance. As will be shown in the following chapters, Enlightenment rationalism galvanized and authorized the professionalization of the sciences beginning at mid-century, as theorists and practitioners pursued ever-increasing levels of expertise through the fracturing of scientific inquiry into increasingly discrete and nuanced areas of professional specialization. Contemporaneous with this emergence of distinct bodies of highly trained specialists were the ascendance of new and often incompatible discourses of the body laden both with the practical modalities and ideological investments of the insular fields from which they derived. Efforts to narrate the material body, whether through the discourse of science or of fiction, were informed by and complicit in this on-going and often contentious program of discursively constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing the material body.

The four chapters of this study will trace pivotal moments in the ideological, narratological, and sociopolitical re/construction of material bodies. The chronological structure of this text is not intended to suggest, however, that the paradigms explored here are linear, monolithic, or uncontested. The collectivist orientations of *Bleak House* which inspire this study's analysis of the discursive construction of the extraordinary body in the high Victorian era may be seen to prevail today in the altered but no less ideologically congruent form of the cost/benefit analysis of prenatal testing and of end-of-life measures, in which the preservation of aberrant bodies is weighed against the collective good. Likewise, echoes of the modernist drive

to formulate an anti-authoritarian discourse of the body that is the subject of chapter three's analysis of Joyce's *Ulysses* can be detected in the Classical and medieval periods, in which extraordinary bodies were described as the manifestation of the irreverence, capriciousness, and playfulness of nature.

Rather than suggesting a sequential, orderly, and predictable evolution in modes of seeing and speaking the body, the chronological structure of this text is intended only to facilitate the analysis of the nexus between social, cultural, and politico-scientific narratives of the body and of the material flesh which shapes and is shaped by such narratives. By focusing upon three pivotal moments and movements in literary history—the social reformist novel of high Victorianism, the gothic romance of the fin-de-siècle, and the post-WWI novel of high modernism—this study seeks to trace evolving and often contested narratives of the body within the context of the emergence of modern clinical medicine and what disability studies scholars have defined as a modern medicalized culture.[8] The title of this text, *From Prodigy to Pathology*, is derived from Rosemarie Garland-Thomson's claim in *Extraordinary Bodies* that the ascendance of the modern medical model has resulted in the pathologizing of the prodigy, "a conversion of wondrous, ominous, pre-Enlightenment monsters…to medical cases" (79).

In the first chapter, "Excess, Transgression, and Transformation," I explore the social reformist novel of the high Victorian era within the context of mid-century British imperialism and the explosive growth of the London metropolis. My reading situates the scarred body of Dickens' heroine, Esther Summerson, alongside real-life British monstrosities, including Daniel Lambert, Britain's fattest man, and Charles Byrne, "the Irish giant." These so-called "monsters

[8] By this I mean a culture informed by the medical model, the commodification of health and hygienic practices, and orientations toward physical and psychological health as a public responsibility and a collective good. According to this paradigm, medical modernity is predicated upon both the guidance and intercession of the expert authority and upon individual self-monitoring and regulation.

of proportion," I argue, embody the transgression of limits which Dickens' Esther also corporealizes in bearing the scars of her smallpox infection, an infection which signals the presence of her material body in the disease-ridden enclaves of the city slums, sites unfit for and forbidden to upper-middle class women like Esther. Such a transgression of limits as materialized in the real and fictive bodies of Lambert, Byrne, and Esther Summerson, I go on to show, signifies prevailing anxieties related to the growth of the empire abroad and of the city at home, suggesting a body politic unmindful of limits and in danger of collapsing beneath the weight of its own disproportionate ambitions. Intemperate, vulnerable, and unpredictable, the social body, like the individual body that is its metonym, calls for intercession, the regulation of the authority capable of reading the signs of distress and debility and of restoring the body politic and the citizen's body alike to a state of equilibrium, to health through moderation and conscientious care.

In the second chapter, entitled "Unbounded Bodies/Unbridled Blood," I explore fin-de-siècle gothic romance in its analysis of Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula.* Late-century gothicism emerges, I contend, as a result of growing fears for the integrity of the individual and the social body. The popularization of the tripartite theory of consciousness, and, in particular, of the existence and potency of subconscious drives and desires galvanized a sense of the individual self-as-other which gave rise at the turn of the century to a fascination in the real world with hypnotism, hysteria, and double-consciousness and to the trope of the secret-sharer or second self in the literary world. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, I argue, exemplifies the era's anxieties over the stability and the knowability of the self, an anxiety paralleled in the popular interest in conjoined twins, such as Millie-Christine McKoy and Daisy and Violet Hilton. This chapter juxtaposes scientific, cultural,

and biographical accounts of conjoined twins with Stevenson's representation of the "multiplicity of selves" within Dr. Jekyll to argue that at the end of the nineteenth century optimism for the burgeoning fields of modern biological and psychological science were met with an equal if not greater fear of their limits, of the other within that science could neither fully explain nor hope to eradicate.

While the first half of chapter two analyzes representations of conjoined twins and literary secret sharers to illuminate prevailing fears of internal threats to the solidity and integrity of the self, the chapter's second half, which takes Stoker's *Dracula* as its focus, centers upon a parallel concern: the fear of the other within shifts to the fear of the other without. I deploy the concept of the Eastern Threat[9] to explore themes of degeneration and racial contamination at the fin-de-siècle. My reading of Stoker's novel is twinned with an analysis of medical, anthropological, and cultural discourses on racial and ethnic others, focusing specifically on Sarah Baartman, the so-called "Hottentot Venus." Representations of racial and ethnic otherness, I assert, are predicated upon readings of the extraordinary bodies of such others that define perceived bodily differences as dangerous, omnipresent, ineradicable, and self-perpetuating. The ostensible sexual rapacity of racial and ethnic others is reflected in the Count's infecting of would-be wives and mothers with the disease of a voluptuous vampirism, as well as in the medical and anthropological analyses of Baartman's anatomy, which purport to find in her body the stigmata of the voracity and fecundity of the non-European, a pernicious lasciviousness which threatens not only the individual body susceptible to "infection" by contact with the foreign other, but also the British racial body, which the atavistic fertility of the racial other seeks to "breed" out of existence. Thus, the emphasis in chapter two on pervasive anxieties at the fin-

[9] This term is used to denote fin-de-siècle Europeans' fear of the non-Christian (and, specifically, Muslim) other who resides at the frontiers of Europe, the borderlands between the Orient and the Occident.

de-siècle over the safety and stability of the individual and social body, over the internal and external threats to which both are vulnerable, authorize discourses of the body which provide renewed vigor for projects of detecting, defining, and containing otherness in its myriad forms. From the identification of markers of latent insanity, addiction, and promiscuity to the locating of the stigmata of racial and ethnic difference in the materiality of the flesh, the diverse discourses of the biological, natural, and social sciences at the fin-de-siècle resulted in a vast corpus of narratives of the body that were reflected in the gothic romances of the day, narratives which, in their almost hysterical profligacy, sought security in the premise of rendering the other knowable and containable.

Chapter three, "Discursive Monsters/Monstrous Discourse," constitutes a definitive shift in social, scientific, and literary representations of singular bodies. In this chapter, I turn my attention to high modernism, deploying Virginia Woolf's assertion that "in or about December 1910, human character changed" ("Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" 320) to argue that narratives of extraordinary bodies in high modernism fundamentally differ from those of the Victorian era and the fin-de-siècle. In chapter three, I focus on James Joyce's iconic novel of the body, *Ulysses*, to argue that Joyce's experimental techniques serve to problematize and to context prevailing discourses of the material body. Specifically, the ascendance of the medical model in the early decades of the twentieth century, I assert, is countered in Joyce by the effort to interrogate discursive constructions of embodiment and to discover and advance various counter-narratives that speak to realities of embodiment that are, ultimately, unspeakable. Unlike the analyses presented in the first half of this study, this chapter and the chapter to follow will not pair literary analysis with an analysis of real-life representations of extraordinarily embodied subjects. This tactical shift reflects the informing premise of this entire work: that after the turn of the century,

the ascendance of the medical model has instigated a domestication of the extraordinary body through its co-optation into the clinical medical paradigm. This pathologizing of the non-normative body constitutes a form of discursive and ideological erasure insofar as the extraordinary body has been rendered a medical case, with the clinician and the physician alone capable of comprehending and narrating the diseased and deformed body. Thus, with the discursive monopoly of clinical medicine on the non-normative body comes the power to coordinate and to contain such bodies. A penumbra of shame and silence surrounds non-normative bodies when taken outside of the clinical context, as the locus of visibility proper to monstrous embodiment moves from the freak show, the drawing room, and the exhibition hall and to the controlled confines of the examining room, the medical photograph, and the hygiene film. It is with this shift toward the monolithic discourse of pathology that Joyce contends in *Ulysses*, as he seeks to restore to the materiality of the body the ambiguity, instability, and inarticulateness that the language of pathology would domesticate or deny.

The fourth and final chapter of this study, "Dis/Embodying the Community," explores Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* within the context of both the eugenics movement and post-World War I efforts to redefine the nature and limits of the community. In the wake of the collective trauma of the Great War and inspired by the idealistic discourse of human perfectibility on which eugenics relies, Woolf's powerful elegy problematizes madness as a trope through which individual and collective bodies define themselves. The twinning of Clarissa, the consummate hostess, and Septimus, the incurable hysteric, Woolf interrogates the modalities of otherness which build communities and selves through a programmatics of disavowal. Woolf's representations of psychiatric practices in the early twentieth century align with her emphasis on the collective work of mourning that must be accomplished if the British social body is to

recover from the physical and psychological injuries of the Great War. The parallel concerns with psychological debility and appropriate mourning, I contend, signify the novel's exploration of the programmatics of right conduct, exemplified by the novel's "Goddesses"—Proportion and Conversion. Singular bodies, I argue in this chapter, not only define the boundaries of the community by materializing, through non-normative form or functioning, that which the community *is not* but they also enable and authorize the re/definition and re/construction of the community through the individual's demonstration of "appropriate" action toward them. Like the collective gaze turned toward the airplane in the novel's first scene, which transforms discrete individuals into a uniform group engaged in a project of meaning-making, meditations on and sympathy for Septimus' death join the fractious members of Clarissa's party in their own work of mourning, a microcosm of the project in which the whole of the British social body is engaged in these post-war years. Likewise, Septimus' action authorizes and motivates Clarissa's own, enabling the celebration of life through the material presence of death.[10] This injunction for the erasure of singular bodies,[11] I argue, echoes what disability scholars have labeled the cure/cover/kill paradigm within the medical model, a model in which those whose embodiments are deemed not recuperable to the norm are often pathologized to the point of civil death,[12] authorizing and frequently compelling their removal--through institutionalization or death--from the public gaze.

Taken as a whole, then, the four chapters of this study endeavor to trace the shifting, amorphous, and frequently contentious position of monstrous bodies in the era of the emergence

[10] At the moment that Clarissa learns of Septimus's suicide, she feels it tangibly from the perspective of Septimus's falling body. The narrative of his suicide is momentarily transformed into the physical manifestation of the act, as Clarissa feels herself in the flesh of Septimus in the seconds prior to and at the moment of impact.

[11] This paradigm is activated through rehabilitation (i.e. Proportion and Conversion), institutionalization, or death.

[12] This is a legal term signifying the loss of the status of the "human" and the forfeiture of rights and protections attending the human.

of the modern medical model, exploring how and why the monster transformed in this era from prodigy to pathology. In the process, this study takes as foundational the premise that the body is at once word and matter, a corporeal entity calling for and constructed by discourse. In seeking to foreground the vexed and complex interdynamics of culture, politics, and science, literary representations of monstrous bodies are situated alongside contemporaneous non-fiction discourses of the body, illuminating the role of literature in popularizing, deconstructing, and subverting body narratives. As this study shows, the act of narrating the body, whether through the empirical language of science or the imaginative discourse of fiction, is inevitably an ambivalent endeavor inasmuch as it seeks to speak for that which is silent, an ostensibly politically and ideologically empowering act, while transforming into discourse that which is immanent presence and thereby making it other than itself.

Chapter 1
Excess, Transgression, and Transformation:
Metamorphic Bodies and the Monstrous City in Dickens' Bleak House

London is the Daniel Lambert of cities.
George Meredith

Subdue your appetites, my dear, and you've conquered human nature.
Charles Dickens

At Home in the Monstrous City

This study begins with the high Victorian era and Dickens' ambitious novel of mid-nineteenth century London, *Bleak House*. This text provides an auspicious foundation for the examination of the nexus between cultural production and the status of extraordinary bodies insofar as the novel is in itself an "extraordinary body," reflecting in its form and content the ambivalence of proportion characteristic of the era. This chapter also seeks to establish a sort of dialectic between Dickens' novel and another of the era's most famous "monsters of proportion," Daniel Lambert, widely celebrated as Britain's fattest man. As will be shown throughout this and subsequent chapters, between the mid-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, the British novel plays a vital role in mirroring, problematizing, and re/envisioning extraordinary embodiment through not only the novels' representations of cultural "freaks" but also through the myriad forms emerging in the Victorian, fin de siècle, and modernist eras, as well as through the discursive structures arising to signify and to interrogate prevailing cultural constructions of singular bodies. As will be explored in this chapter, Dickens' *Bleak House* occupies a critical moment in the representation of the extraordinarily embodied and of their tenuous incorporation into the collective body of imperial Britain. Caught up in an amorphous and ambiguous subject position where the "freak," the "curiosity," and the "wonder" collide, the singularly embodied subject could have as easily found him/herself entertaining the elite in the drawing rooms of the aristocrat as on display for the delight of the masses in one of the ubiquitous freak shows continuously touring the British countryside. The vexed positionality of the extraordinary body in this era reflects the contending discourses of Enlightenment rationality and Romantic wonder,

the locus where the eminently decipherable laws of nature clash with the irresolvable mysteries of creation. The deviant body, as will be seen, provides the occasion for and the reflection of this contest between the knowable and the unknowable, the predictable and the unforeseen. As such, corporeal singularity enables the casting of prevailing cultural anxieties, questions, and concerns onto itself, reflecting in its abject and marvelous materiality all that cannot be absorbed, understood, or delineated within a culture. Thus, the extraordinary body marks the meeting point of the wondrous, the portentous, the curious, and the freaky, both eliciting and excusing the attention it garners, as the ambiguous status of the singular self comes to metonymically reflect and replace the status of the social body into which it comes.

Within this context, then, the concern of this chapter to situate a reading of *Bleak House* within the context of high Victorian representations of extraordinary embodiment in general and of "monsters of proportion" in particular becomes clear. Scholars have long recognized the social reformist aesthetic of Dickens' great novel, finding in his depiction of mid-century London not only an indictment of the abhorrent conditions to which the city's most vulnerable populations were subjected but also of the labyrinthine structures of the systems of power, symbolized by the court of Chancery, whose sole function is to abuse and exploit those which they were designed to serve. Relatively little attention has been paid, however, to the novel's exploration of singular embodiment, its representation of the myriad cultural "monsters" in the midst of the great city. It is the goal of this chapter, then, not only to situate the novel within an historical context in which extraordinary bodies routinely provided a source of rich entertainment for the affluent and the lower classes alike, but also to problematize the novel's function as an extraordinary body itself, an excessive and transgressive text which, like other "monsters of proportion", absorbs, deconstructs, and reflects back the collective anxieties of a prodigious (and growing) city at the

heart of an ever-expanding empire. By situating the novel alongside representations of "freaks" and "curiosities" like Daniel Lambert, the function both of the extraordinarily embodied subject and of the novels which represent them will become clear. This chapter will demonstrate that both singular bodies and the novels which reflect them ultimately serve a therapeutic function, enabling the diagnosis and ultimate cure of the social body which they represent through a form of discursive reconstruction—rehabilitation through narrative.

The first serial installment of Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* appeared just one year after London's Great Exhibit of 1851 and roughly fifteen years prior to the Berlin Conference and the start of the infamous "Scramble for Africa." Conjoined with the critical political, economic, and military implications of these two events were scientific and especially medical revolutions occasioned by the experimentations of anatomists and Darwinian-inspired biologists. The vastly growing body of research and the insights gleaned through the increasingly professionalized physical sciences gave rise to a ubiquitous discourse of the body that came to permeate social, cultural, and political systems. Indeed, the Victorian era is characterized by the somatization of socio-cultural preoccupations, as pervasive social questions and concerns were etched into the flesh of both corporate (i.e. "average," "normal") social bodies and individual (and typically anomalous) subjects.

It is within this context, then, that *Bleak House* may be understood to participate in a complex interplay of discourses, as medico-scientific, political, and cultural paradigms intersect with one another to construct, confound, and complicate socially permissible understandings of the human body and its role in constructing individual subjects and social systems. A fundamental issue at stake in *Bleak House*, therefore, is the fluid process of configuring and refiguring the embodied individual in an environment of unprecedented urbanization and its

attendant social change. Informed by revised understandings of biological processes and material embodiment and galvanized by the intractable assertion of English aspirations to global economic and political dominance manifest in the Great Exhibition, *Bleak House* interrogates the implications of unchecked growth, advancing a difficult view of contemporary life and embodied individuation in a period of unprecedented growth and change through industrialization. *Bleak House*, like the London which may constitute the novel's most significant character, is prodigious and excessive. Its sprawling discourse mirrors the prodigious disproportion to which its London has succumbed, while the multiform plot structure traces a narratological trajectory from enervating diffuseness to potent interconnectedness that is the novel's answer to the pernicious effects of imperial England's unprecedented expansion.

As a consequence of the era's pervading concern with the consequences of breakneck mechanization and massive growth, George Meredith's comparison of London to Daniel Lambert provides an important context through which to understand Dickens' characterization of the city, its use in problematizing the impact of urbanization on the social system in general and on the embodied human subject in particular. In her analysis of Victorian "freakery," Joyce L. Huff argues for the central role played by Daniel Lambert in a vexed project of English national identity formation (37-39). Lambert, who at the time of his death in 1809 was reportedly Britain's heaviest man, weighing in at more than 700 pounds, enjoyed a national fame that continues to this day—most overtly in the widespread practice of naming taverns and inns for him. Invoking and extending M.M. Bakhtin's assertion that the fat man in Victorian Britain came to embody the carnivalesque, subsuming all other potential forms of aberrance into a sanitized figure of unregulated excess, Huff maintains that these "prodigies of human proportion"

corporealized the ambivalence which lay at the heart of a population undergoing rampant social upheaval.

As arguably the first fully modernized, industrial nation in Europe, one whose grasp traversed the globe in the form of a rapidly expanding empire, England and its major industrial cities experienced a disorienting and exhilarating explosion of growth. Its citizens found themselves challenged to construct new identities in the face of changing economic, social, and political realities. It is no coincidence, then, that a citizenry confronted every day with a social order ever transgressing scientific, ideological, and geopolitical boundaries and spilling across physical and psychological borderlands once deemed both impenetrable and sacrosanct should discover in the monster of physical disproportion a fitting, fascinating, and terrifying corollary.

In Lambert, Victorian audiences found a mirror for the hubristic, insistent enlargement in which they, as citizens of a seemingly unstoppable industrial empire, daily participated. As Mary Douglas notes, "What is being carved in human flesh is an image of society" (143). In the almost obsessive examination, speculation, lionization, and—sometimes—the repudiation of anomalous figures like Daniel Lambert, Britons materialized latent social desires even as they distanced and neutralized their anxieties by projecting menacing forces onto the body of a deviant other. Carved safely, intractably, and irredeemably onto a fetishized body that participates in but is, for all intents and purposes, excluded from an overarching social body,[13] collective fantasies and fears of unrestrained growth are given physical form. Furthermore, the incessant inspection of the giant's accoutrements—his clothes, his carriage, his furnishings (Huff 46)—manifests a

[13] As will be shown, this overarching social body is one which is created and authorized by constructions of the norm. The creation of the norm is a process of social ideation in which the potent figure of the anomalous and unincorporable (what Foucault terms the "disavowed") other is harnessed by the overarching social body to build an ideal image of itself.

communal dream and terror of disproportionate consumption, of an infinite supply of goods limited only by unstable boundaries of the consuming body itself.

The Beast Within: Metamorphic Bodies and the Monstrous City in *Bleak House*

Meredith's equation of London with the prodigious body of Daniel Lambert provides an important framework through which to understand Dickens' *Bleak House*, for the prevailing narrative impulse is the examination[14] of the city's "body" and its functioning, the description of the deforming effects of heedless enlargement and the identification of opportunities for restoration. Like Lambert, nineteenth century London presented both the thrill and the threat of unmitigated growth. Its industrialization provided impoverished laborers and ambitious businessmen both the fantasy of heretofore unimaginable success and the terror of unspeakable deprivation. This troubling duality is figured in the celebrated corpulence that simultaneously delighted Daniel Lambert's audience while endangering, and ultimately claiming, Lambert's life. As will be shown, this problematic duality of profligate growth also lies at the heart of *Bleak House*.

In perhaps no other work does Dickens, the quintessential writer of the city, capture the spirit and sense of industrializing, imperial London. Here, the streets of London lie open to exhibition, dissection, wonder, and fear, like the body of Daniel Lambert himself before an awed audience. Its most troubling attributes—its poverty, its violence, its sickness—are dragged before the fascinated spectator like the emblems of Lambert's own monstrous disproportion: the suit of

[14] I use the term "examination" here expressly for its medical resonance because, I will argue, Dickens' project appears to be fundamentally one of diagnosis and narratological cure. Dickens' primary investment here is in a program of redeeming the material human body from the depersonalizing, de-corporealizing effects of social discourse, power/knowledge systems, and disciplinary practices. Thus, Dickens subjects London to medico-legal processes of surveillance, examination, and description as a means of revoking their effects, restoring individuality to embodied subjects through a return to language and the resulting construction of strategic counter-narratives.

clothes that attest to a body rendered terminal by the force of its own obsessive consumption. The material evidence of its rapid overgrowth—the labyrinthine streets, the slums, the impromptu and perilously impermanent structures of Tom-All-Alone's—are the geographical counterparts to Lambert's oversized furnishings, bearing witness to the reality of a world not made to sustain the flesh of such a wonder. It may be that Henry James had Dickens' *Bleak House* particularly in mind when he described Victorian novels as "loose baggy monsters," for *Bleak House* is monstrous indeed, its pages filled with heterogeneous crowds like so many Englishmen simultaneously trying on Lambert's suit of clothes. Its plotlines teem with the diseased, the dangerous, and the endangered who, like Lambert's exhibited flesh, sicken and die under the weight of an ever-growing excess.

Perhaps *Bleak House*'s most famous scene is its opening one. Dickens' celebrated description of the blinding London fog, the cloying city mud, and the contaminating effluvia of its overcrowded streets has justly received the lion's share of critical attention since the novel's first serialization. What has been less often noticed, however, is the degree to which such depictions of the urban center amplify prevailing anxieties regarding the unregulated expansion of the city. Of particular importance in this regard is the flight of both the rural poor and the colonial expatriate into the heart of England. In his *The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Class in Manchester,* James Kay Shuttleworth equates the squalor and the overcrowding of English industrial cities within an indiscriminate flood of diverse, unregulated, and exogenous populations to the metropolis. For Shuttleworth, the appalling conditions of the city slums are the direct result of a natural tendency on behalf of some of its inhabitants to a pernicious fecundity and an unhealthy conglomeration of disparate—and disharmonious—parts:

> Frequently the Inspectors found two or more families crowded together in one small house….and often more than one family

> lived in a damp cellar containing only one room in whose pestilential atmosphere from twelve to sixteen persons were crowded. To these fertile sources of disease were sometimes added the keeping of pigs and other animals to the house with other nuisances of the most revolting character….(Pauper houses) are frequently able to accommodate from twenty to thirty or more lodgers among whom are the most abandoned characters….Here without distinction of age or sex, careless of all decency, they are crowded into small and wretched apartments, the same bed receiving a succession of tenants until too offensive for their unfastidious senses….The houses (of the poor) are often built with a total neglect of order. (n.pg.)

For Shuttleworth, the horrors of the city derive from the breakdown of social hierarchies. Familial, gender, and racial taxonomies collapse beneath the exigencies of poverty. Indeed, amid such volatile conditions, the very integrity and sanctity of the human are threatened, as Shuttleworth demonstrates in his description of an "ignorance and pauperism" that turns men and women into brutes and animals. The rampant commingling of "incompatible" groups, the homogenizing of national, social, and gender identities, deprives the body of its stability, according to Shuttleworth, rendering it permeable, vulnerable to both spiritual and physical contamination. These "promiscuous" slums, Shuttleworth asserts, become the originary points not only for moral depravity but for the infectious disease to which immorality is metonymically linked.

In Shuttleworth's formulation, the swelling populations, rampant urban growth, and inattention to social taxonomies in the overcrowded city slums engenders a fundamental change in all orders of the social body, the nation-state irrevocably and perniciously altered by those unincorporable bodies absorbed into its "flesh." While Dickens' *Bleak House* suggests a far less xenophobic orientation than Shuttleworth's treatise, particularly in Shuttleworth's scapegoating of Irish immigrants, his aligning them with a contaminating barbarism that infects and transforms the laboring classes exposed to them, Dickens' novel does suggest a similar concern with the

homogenizing and departicularizing influences of the industrial metropolis.[15] *Bleak House*'s swirling fog and omnipresent mud serve important symbolic functions here insofar as they represent an understanding of the city as a site which obscures and elides boundaries between persons. Bodily integrity gives way to the opaque fog; rituals of physical purity collapse beneath the mire of penetrating mud. Surfaces lose their distinctiveness in the flux and flow of cloudy, pestilential air and thick, filthy water.

While Shuttleworth equates the threatening departicularization of the individual body, its permeability and transmogrification by the contaminating influences of untenable elements (i.e. the racial and ethnic "other"), Dickens seems to align this transforming and homogenizing process with the machinations of the industrial center itself. Human embodiment, individuation itself, is lost in the fog and mud of the city: these pernicious elements arise not from any human operation, but from the streets, the buildings, the factories,[16] and, most important, from the social institutions by and through which the metropolis operates. Dickens' understandings of the city as an abstract principle operating autonomously in the de-individuation of discrete subjects for the perpetuation of impersonal, preexisting, and pervasive social systems anticipate in important

[15] An important example of this would be the character of Hortense, the immoral, embittered, and startlingly vampiric French servant. While her malevolent influence threatens all orders of society, endangering Lady Dedlock most especially, her impact on Guster, the Snagsbys' maid, is most telling. In Hortense's presence, Guster endures the most violent and long-lasting series of epileptic seizures she has ever experienced. These scenes echo Shuttleworth's formulation of the perniciously deforming effects of the bodies of foreign "others" on the working class. For Shuttleworth, the lower classes are particularly vulnerable to such influences, the rampant rise and spread of infectious disease illuminating the dire consequences of such reckless commingling. For Dickens, however, these scenes illustrate one of the novel's most important concerns: the body's sensitivity to moral depredation, its capacity to reflect and magnify hidden truths. For Dickens, the body becomes a barometer of individual as well as social well-being.

[16] Significantly, while Dickens does seem to lay a great deal of the blame for the poverty, illiteracy, violence, and sickness of the laboring classes at the feet of industrialization, particularly in his later novel, *Hard Times,* it would be incorrect to categorize Dickens as anti-industrialization. On the contrary, *Bleak House*'s portrait of the iron-master, Mr. Rouncewell, is largely positive. Here Dickens appears to promote the potential benefits of an industrialization informed by compassion and humane principles. In particular, the education of the sons' wives exemplifies an upward mobility and egalitarianism possible when financial means is aligned with humanism and reformist activism.

ways Foucault's analyses of the rise of disciplinary power/knowledge structures in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In his seminal studies of the mechanisms of modern subject-formation, Foucault emphasizes the critical importance of the homogenizing process, describing it as

> a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, it gestures, its behavior. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down, and rearranges it. A 'political anatomy,' which was also a 'mechanics of power', was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operates as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. (138)

According to Foucault, the modern body becomes subject to the regulating forces of Enlightenment power/knowledge systems through a process of standardization, incorporation, and transposition. In industrialized, capitalistic society, the hegemony of the norm mandates the wholesale interchangeability of the human body. Foucault writes, "For the marks that once indicated status, privilege, and affiliation were increasingly replaced…by a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogenous social body….In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity" (184). A body which cannot be assimilated, that which is not amenable to the capitalistic forces of production, relying as they do on the regulated standards of appropriate bodily function and proportion, is cast beyond the pale of society, rendered deviant.

Furthermore, as Paul Youngquist argues, this normalizing process is a direct consequence of mechanization, as bodily expectations and requirements begin to be shaped by the machines which these bodies are required to operate (xvi-xxv, 12). *Bleak House*'s penetrating fog powerfully emblematizes the regulating forces of a rapidly expanding industrial society, while the mud that settles into the most private spaces of the individual body, simultaneously marking, obscuring, and befouling it, suggests the profound vulnerability of the body to encroachment and

change. The bodies of Dickens' city dwellers are powerfully altered by the environments into which they come, made unrecognizable even to themselves by incorporation into the body of the industrial giant.

Embodying the Environment: "Fever Houses," Contagion, and the Social Body

If, as *Bleak House* suggests, private bodies are both receptive and malleable, susceptible to the processes of urbanization which define, constrain, and compel corporeal appearance and functioning, then the boundaries of the body can never be fixed. The borders between selves and the spaces they inhabit become increasingly porous, as sensitive to the pressures exerted from without as those issuing from within. Such bodily fragility lies at the very heart of *Bleak House*. A central preoccupation is the extent to which bodies are shaped, threatened, disfigured, and even killed through the devastating influences of an unhealthy environment.

The "bad air" which so haunts Dickens' London takes its most important precedent from eighteenth and early nineteenth century "miasma" theory, the idea that bodily health is directly proportionate to the healthful or pestilential airs one breathes. Agitators for sanitary reform lobbied for the creation of effective sewer systems and the draining of city slums as a method of preventing disease outbreaks. In important contrast to the germ theorists which would take precedence in the second half of the nineteenth century, miasma theorists posited an unassailable correlation between human and environmental "health." As the presumptive leader of the sanitary reform movement, as well as Jeremy Bentham's most important disciple, Edwin Chadwick's philosophies provide vital insight into the principles and mechanisms of the movement in which Dickens himself was fervently involved. In his important *Report on Sanitary Conditions*, Chadwick asserts that "such diseases, wherever its attacks are frequent, are always

found in connection with…physical circumstances" (n.pg.). Furthermore, as in Shuttleworth's earlier formulation, the pernicious effects of an unhealthy environment acted upon the moral nature as well as the physical body:

> That in the districts where the mortality is greatest, the births are not only sufficient to replace the numbers removed by death but to add to the population. That the younger population bred up under noxious physical agencies is inferior in physical organization and general health to a population preserved from the presence of such agencies. That the population so exposed is least susceptible to moral influences and the effects of education are more transient than with a healthy population. That these adverse circumstances tend to produce an adult population short-lived, improvident, and intemperate….That these habits lead to the abandonment of all conveniences and decencies of life and especially lead to the overcrowding of their homes which is destructive to the morality as well as the health of large classes of both sexes. (Ibid.)

The moral and physical debility envisioned by sanitary reformers like Chadwick and Shuttleworth derive from the body's porosity, its vulnerability to the influences of other bodies and the spaces they inhabit. Such bodies are always already marked as excessive, transgressive, and disproportionate insofar as they impugn cherished ideas of bodily integrity and give the lie to Enlightenment notions of autonomous selfhood, actuating in their stead a dynamic of consumption/absorption that renders impossible any sense of a stable, definable, discrete, and insulated identity. Like Daniel Lambert and other monsters of human proportion, the body posited by the sanitary reformers refuses to recognize any law of physical moderation, advancing instead the body's metamorphic instrumentality. For sanitary reformers, including Dickens himself, the body is simultaneously receiver, conduit, and catalyst of external forces, one which remakes all things in its own image, even as it, too, is transformed into the likeness of that which it sees and touches. It is therefore no coincidence that, as Huff notes, Lambert's possessions continued to draw crowds long after his death, for the Victorian association of the body with its

environment was so strong that personal items and private dwellings were often sufficient for audiences to invoke the absent body that once lived among them.

Another vital issue evinced in the passage cited above is the purported unnatural fecundity of the laboring body, replicating on the level of human reproduction the body's capacity to engender change throughout the social system, anticipating what McHold has identified as a general fear of disorder and degeneracy pervading the whole of Europe by the 1860s (24). This expectation of general social decline borrows from Lamarckian beliefs in the inheritability of acquired traits, the sense that deformities, once suffered, may be passed from generation to generation until the entire system collapses.

Echoing Shuttleworth's vision of English society as one large, interconnected body in which a threat to one order inevitably harms the entire structure, the world of *Bleak House* is one in which disorder, danger, and contagion can never be contained. The pernicious influence of the so-called "bad air" not only threatens the physical, social, and moral framework of the slum dwellers, those most immediately exposed to these pestilential vapors, but also the morality and integrity of the whole social body. In *Bleak House*, Tom-All-Alone's, the slum encircling the city, functions as a menacing presence overshadowing every operation of the city:

> [Tom] has his revenge. Even the winds are his messenger, and they serve him in these hours of darkness. There is not a drop of Tom's corrupted blood but propagates infection and contagion somewhere. It shall pollute, this very night, the choice stream (in which chemists on analysis would find the genuine nobility) of a Norman house, and his Grace shall not be able to say nay to the infamous alliance. There is not an atom of Tom's slime, not a cubic inch of any pestilential gas in which he lives, not one obscenity or degradation about him, not an ignorance, not a wickedness, not a brutality of his committing, but shall work its retribution up to the proudest of the proud and to the highest of the high. Verily, what with tainting, plundering, and spoiling, Tom has his revenge. (654-657)

Within the context of rampant, indiscriminate, and pervading contagion, Esther Summerson's illness assumes vital importance. As the illegitimate and unacknowledged daughter of a Baroness and a disgraced and impoverished sailor, Esther is a liminal figure, uneasily inhabiting an ambiguous social and moral ground. However, in her role as housekeeper and lynchpin of Bleak House, her position is decidedly middle class, the product of a monied intervention that allows her upward social mobility. As the passage cited above demonstrates, however, not even the insulated walls of the upper-middle class home or the love of its inhabitants can quarantine Esther from the contaminating influence of Tom-All-Alone's. The homogenizing and all-encompassing tendencies of the monstrous city cannot safely absorb all of its component parts. Bodies altered by abuse, neglect, and disease will have their effect, changing in both subtle and dramatic ways the entire social body. Though seemingly far removed from Esther's idyllic world of peaceful domesticity, Jo's contaminating presence still finds its way into Bleak House. That Esther and Charley seek out the sick boy makes little difference. Where the compunctions of charity and obligation do not obtain, the inevitable forces of revelation and revenge will.

Esther's startling description of her incipient illness provides an important illustration. As she begins to succumb to the smallpox infection, Esther feels "a curious sense of fullness…*as if I had grown too large*" (463**,** emphasis added). This odd comparison of fever with largeness, disproportion, and excess is critical in a text preoccupied with the ramifications of reckless and immoderate urbanization. Esther's sense of her body as having surpassed its boundaries operates as a powerful metaphor for the city that consumes and discards without care or compassion. In her extraordinary study of purification rituals, *Purity and Danger*, Douglas defines "dirt" as "matter out of place" (44**).** Perpetually harried and "moved on," Jo, too, is matter out of place.

The homeless child of unknown parentage, he is without social role, his body incapable of assimilation[17] into the structure that has both made and disavowed him.

In Foucauldian paradigms of disciplinary subjectification, the modern subject is constructed through the creation of a docile body that is standardized, interchangeable, "normal," and normative. The homogenized, unmarked body is, therefore, virtually indistinguishable from other "normal" bodies. This incorporable body is one which is capable of invisibility, its standardization and interchangeability akin to a form of disembodiment which the aberrant figures of *Bleak House* can never know. Thus, in contrast to the transparency of the norm, Jo, like Daniel Lambert and similar monstrous others, is hyper-visible.

Indeed, the extreme visibility of *Bleak House*'s unincorporable characters mimetically links to the lived experiences of real-life "deviants," typified by popular entertainment in the freak show and traveling carnival and in elite culture with the scientific museums and lecture halls of prestigious universities. Jan Bondeson describes Lambert's initial refusal to exhibit himself and his disdain for the insatiable curiosity of townsfolk who converged, uninvited, to gawk at him (245). That Lambert ultimately renounced his opposition testifies both to the social pressure he endured and to the financial and physical difficulty of making a living in a social environment not built to support such aberrant embodiments.

More tragic still is the case of Charles Byrne, the so-called Irish Giant. Standing over 7 feet tall, Byrne suffered a lifelong terror of being placed on display against his will, reportedly paying £500 to have his body cast into the sea upon his death. Unfortunately for Byrne, the

[17] It is important at this point to differentiate between assimilation, incorporation, and absorption. In this context, I take assimilation to mean the defining and successful assumption of a discrete and recognized social role. Similarly, I use the term incorporation to signify the assignment of the subject to that role. Conversely, I take absorption simply to mean the inclusion within social and territorial boundaries entities which may or may not have a legitimate and predefined "place" within them. By such definitions, therefore, Jo, solely by virtue of his physical presence there, may be seen as absorbed into the city, but, without a recognized social role, he is not and cannot be assimilated or incorporated to it.

illustrious physician, anatomist, and dissectionist, John Hunter, reportedly doubled the conspirators' pay to retrieve the body. Once sufficiently dissected and catalogued, Hunter placed Byrne's skeleton on display at Mr. Tulkinghorn's own Lincoln's Inn Field.

Foucault defines such compulsory visibility as another vital manifestation of power/knowledge structures:

> The existence of a whole set of techniques and institutions for measuring, supervising, and correcting the abnormal brings into play the disciplinary mechanisms to which the fear of the plague gave rise. All the mechanisms of power…are disposed around the abnormal individual to brand him and to alter him. (199-200)

Those who by volition, circumstance, or nature defy culturally-imposed standards of behavioral, economic, and/or physiological proportion are ascribed to an incessant and conspicuous visibility. Through this compulsory visibility, normal/abnormal binaries may be defined, exemplified, and enforced for the entire population.

As significant as Jo's visibility are the catalyzing influences of his body. If a well-regulated and normalized body may be of a nature with a virtual disembodiment, then extraordinary embodiments, in whatever form, come to emblematize pure corporeality, a threatening fleshly presence that has reverberations throughout the entire social structure. Esther's feverish "largeness" is the direct result of the contaminating influence of Jo's body: it is a menace that functions beyond the will of the subject, a wholly involuntary consequence of bodies acting upon one another in physical space. Her sickness and disfigurement arise as the result of the absorption of the "other," of the penetration of the boundaries of the body by that which is unassimilable to it. In her analysis of pollution beliefs, Douglas argues that the "uncleanness of dirt is that which must not be included if a (social) pattern is to be maintained" (50). For Douglas, matter which is "out of place" is volatile, for, in lacking a stable, predefined

social space, it threatens to assert its polluting presence anywhere and everywhere in the social body, transforming that social body through the insistent existence of the excessive and unthinkable.

The pernicious power of Jo's unassimilable body evades every attempt of the social structure to disavow it, to quarantine itself by forcing him perpetually to "move on." On the contrary, the inevitably transient nature of Jo's existence, the very refusal of the social system to provide him a stable place within its structure, ensures the circulation of his pestilential frame across the cultural echelons, as exemplified by Charley's and Esther's sickness. Representing as they do the polar ends of the class spectrum, their contamination by a single agent suggests the leveling forces at play as the urban giant endeavors to homogenize, standardize, and regulate bodies according to its own self-serving interests. Indeed, Jo presents only one of a host of instances of contaminated and contaminating bodies matriculating through the streets of London. The residents of the brickmakers' hovels provide additional examples, hunger forcing them to migrate from the countryside to the city center and back again as an industrial London uses their bodies for its own survival and casts them away when no longer needed.

Bleak House's smallpox narrative figures importantly in the social reformist agenda which informs much of Dickens' oeuvre. The interconnectedness which Dickens sees at the heart of modern society necessitates a vested interest in and an inevitable anxiety toward legislative agendas and public policies that perpetuate unjust treatment. Just as physicians argued the influence of the organism's diet in shaping the consuming body, so Dickens asserts the interdependent relationship of public and private bodies. Jo's menace is the direct result of the social forces that shaped him; he is the ignorant beast rampaging through city streets,

inadvertently hurting himself and others by virtue of his inability to belong anywhere in the social body:

> Jo and the other lower animals get on in the unintelligible mess as they can. It is market-day. The blinded oxen, over-goaded, over-driven, never guided, run into wrong places and are beaten out, and plunge red-eyed and foaming at stone walls, and often sorely hurt the innocent, and often sorely hurt themselves….Turn [a] dog's descendents wild, like Jo, and in a very few years they will so degenerate that they will even lose their bark—but not their bite. (238)

Just as his infectiousness disfigures Esther's face, removing her from whom she once was, so will the "teeth" of Jo's illiteracy, vagrancy, and contagiousness ultimately devour the social body that has devoured him.

Entropy and Exhaustion: Expansionist Dreams and Consuming Nightmares

Themes of degeneration, entropy, combustion, and collapse recur throughout *Bleak House*. These pervasive images extend what occurs with individual bodies on the micro level to the macro of the social body. Dickens' London is worn out, drained, and disintegrating beneath the weight of its own convolutions. Significantly, this characterization of the city as depleted by excess is strongly reminiscent of broader nineteenth century understandings of the giant's body itself. Physicians, scientists, and laymen alike assumed a paradoxical mental and bodily weakness attendant with prodigious size. W. Gordon Smythies asserted that giants are "given to melancholy, the burthen of their greatness becomes an intolerable weight not to be cheerfully borne, which they shuffle off at an early age, most of them dying while still in the prime of life" (715). Like the city which cannot bear the pressure of its immensity, the physical body grown too large demonstrates a similar lack of strength. Human giants, whether tall of stature or obese,

were regularly assumed to be short-lived, their vital forces sapped in the effort to sustain such disproportionate bulk. For Dickens, pervasive cultural understandings of the nature of the human giant finds a haunting corollary in the swelling British empire at the heart of which is the megalithic city, London. The informing impulse at work in *Bleak House* is the illumination of the parallels between social and individual disproportion, the effort to write his way out of the tragic fate suffered by real-life human giants.

The interconnectedness of the private and public body which is so critical to Dickens' narrative project manifests most sharply in two representational polarities, the crowd and the individual body. Tom-All-Alone's is presented primarily as an abyss of excessive, undifferentiated embodiments. When Snagsby and Bucket enter the slum, perhaps the greatest terror they encounter is the mass of nameless humanity that seems to emanate from the dilapidated walls and dank streets only to be immediately absorbed back into them: "[T]he crowd…hovers around the three visitors like a dream of horrible faces and fades away up alleys and into ruins and behind walls, and…flits about them until they leave the place" (331).

In contradistinction to the amorphous, replete, and tidal horrors of the crowds at Tom's, Dickens installs a cavalcade of grotesque figures to further emblematize how the abject body deforms the environment into which it comes. From Jo's infectiousness to the hideous Phil Squod's greasy imprints along every route he takes, *Bleak House* affirms the inherent influence of all whom the social body consumes, implicating the public in its own mutilation when it fails to provide a sustainable place for its itinerate and unwanted vagrants.

Krook's death by spontaneous combustion provides an important example of this idea in the novel's symbolic economy. Metonymically linked to Chancery Court's Lord Chancellor, after whom he is nicknamed, the fate of Krook's body presages the destiny of the public body

which consumes without care, absorbing disparate elements without thought or recognition. Krook's rag and bottle shop mirrors Chancery's pernicious acquisitiveness, absorbing all things into itself while rendering those elements useless, broken, impotent. That the manifestation of Krook's demise should be an all-pervading, rancid ooze is especially significant here. As Douglas asserts in her analysis of Sartre's famous description of viscosity,

> The viscous is a state half way between solid and liquid. It is like a cross-section in a process of change. It is unstable, but it does not flow….There is no gliding on its surface. Its stickiness is a trap, it clings like a leech; it attacks the boundary between myself and it. Long columns falling off my fingers suggest my own substance flowing into the pool of stickiness….[T]o touch stickiness is to risk diluting myself into viscosity….In this way the first contact with stickiness enriches a child's experience. He has learnt something about himself and the properties of matter and the interrelation of between the self and other things. (47)

Meditation on the interdependent relationship of selves to one another and to the spaces they inhabit operates on the level of the individual, physical body because, as Douglas goes on to argue, "The structure of living organisms is better able to reflect complex social forms….[The body's] boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious" (142). Dickens' maimed, disfigured, disintegrating, and combusting bodies parallel a similar social disintegration, the collapse of an expansive and expanding body politic ever in danger of transgressing its limits, of superseding its capacity for self-rule and self-care.

The draining of the (public and private) body's energy unleashes another destructive force, that of regressive temporality. Dickens' tactic counters laudatory assumptions of the irrefutable march of progress presumed by Enlightenment rationalism. Dickens rejects paradigms of a modern, progressive London by substituting for a pre-lapsarian city emerging from the primordial ooze and moving toward ever greater levels of civilization the image of an apocalyptic city, one that is devolving rather than evolving through time toward an inevitable

oblivion. Once again, such a thematic may be traced to scientific and cultural views of the giant as primeval monster, both the antithesis and the menace of the self-determining, perfectible, and ever-evolving Enlightenment subject. This devolution is the inevitable consequence of an England constrained and consumed by the monster of its own excess.

Mired in the incomprehensible, blinding muck, the human subject loses not only his individuality but his potential for self-actualization. Involuntarily incorporated into a system not of his own making, individuals like Richard Carstone become the instruments through which the system perpetuates itself. Such a reading graphically exemplifies Foucaldian models of discipline and subjectification, as individuals are co-opted into and transfigured by preexistent, obfuscating power/knowledge systems, systems which are themselves actuated solely by principles of self-preservation.

Such considerations of the public and private body deformed by improvident growth and temporally regressed by an irrational drive to explode boundary-marking principles of rational self-containment were critically important in the context of *Bleak House*'s initial serialization. Dickens published the novel's first installment a little more than a year after the famed Great Exhibition of 1851. Ostensibly an occasion to exhibit the cultural and technological achievements of nations around the globe, the Exhibition in reality was an irrefutable assertion of England's industrial, scientific, and imperial dominance.

While Dickens rarely mentions the Great Exhibition explicitly in his contemporaneous writings, England's expansionist agenda plays a vital role in *Bleak House.* Exemplified most importantly by Mrs. Jellyby and the "active ladies" with which she associates, Dickens laments the "telescopic philanthropy" that produces corruption and despair both at home and abroad. Mrs. Jellyby and her ilk dedicate every waking hour to the planning of foreign charitable exploits

while their own homes and children go to rack and ruin through maternal neglect. Significantly, these excursions typically end in tragedy not only for those at home but also for the colonized recipients of the women's benevolence.

Dickens' characterization of England's charitable ladies is significant insofar as it manifests the ultimately interdependent nature of personal, social, and national contact: in Dickens' world, the currents of both benevolence and of harm are never unidirectional. The unintentional hurts imposed abroad are reciprocated, and indeed one may argue that they are amplified, at home. The dehumanization of Jo is an important example of this dynamic:

> It must be a strange state, not merely to be told that I am scarcely human…but to feel it of my own knowledge all my life. To see the horses, dogs, and cattle go by me and to know that in ignorance I belong to them and not to the superior beings in my shape whose delicacy I offend! (237)

Misguided philanthropy, Dickens suggests, aligns with and may indeed exacerbate the injuries inflicted by flagrant imperial aggression, rendering innocent victims monstrous or bestial through both callous neglect and through misguided intervention which are the twin weapons of telescopic philanthropy. For Dickens, the incapacity of Mrs. Jellyby and her colleagues to "see anything nearer than Africa" imposes a brutalizing blindness to suffering at home and an equally destructive paternalism abroad. These paradoxical forces of neglect and disruption exemplify a social body grown so large its proportions defy its own self-understanding. These over-reaching ladies have no ability to comprehend what they do; they are blind to their own excesses and the catastrophic consequences of them.

The Power, Pleasure, and Privilege of Excess

While Dickens is deeply invested in defining the pernicious consequences of a rapidly urbanizing London on the bodies, minds, and spirits of its inhabitants, of equal importance to his

project is the assertion of the redemptive potential intrinsic to individuated subjectivity. Embodied subjects in *Bleak House* possess the potent privilege of a strongly material selfhood informed by will, desire, and embodied experience. The novel's competing imperatives of optimism and fatalism reflect in important ways rival tendencies in mid-Victorian society toward the belief in rational progressivism and the contrary fear of wholesale cultural degeneration. The perverse and prodigious narrative of *Bleak House* mirrors the mid-Victorian struggle against a confounding duality that characterized this period of unprecedented expansion and attendant social change.

Significantly, Dickens continues an established paradigm through which such social paradoxes are inscribed on and resolved through anomalous bodies. Like the antagonistic forces of envy and revulsion manifest in audiences' responses to Daniel Lambert, Dickens invokes scarred, repudiated, and disavowed bodies to corporealize both socio-cultural deformations and their resolution. Dickens' complex and controversial dual narrative structure is a principal instrument of this. It is no coincidence that the second narrative voice belongs to Esther Summerson, the disfigured smallpox survivor whose illegitimate birth brings disgrace to an ancient aristocratic family. Esther's status as first-person narrator suggests the vital role played by deviant subjects in reforming, restoring, and transforming the social body. Indeed, as will be shown, Esther's narrative acts as a potent corrective to the impersonal—and considerably darker—discourse of the omniscient, third-person narrator. This investment of an ostensibly displaced and disavowed subject with a narrative voice to counteract and cure the (monstrous) discourse of the third person narrative is authorized by and through Esther's very liminality.

The twin forces of Esther's illegitimacy and her disfigurement activate a marginalization that is both hereditary and ascribed, thereby encompassing two of Victorian England's most

important paradigms: the competing theories of biological determinism and rational self-actualization. As will be seen, Esther's class mobility undermines both long-established hierarchical models of ascribed status as well as more contemporary, Darwinian-influenced paradigms of genetic predestination. Similarly, her scarification shatters preexisting social roles, casting her into transgressive, amorphous, and undefined spaces by rendering her unfit for traditional systems based on marriage and motherhood. Thus, Esther's ability to operate productively, as exemplified most critically in the construction of her personal narrative, explodes established social orders and expands social understandings of the individual (and profoundly embodied) subject—her meaning, use, capacity, and value. As a result, Esther's excessive corporeality enlarges the social field into which it comes, defining new standards of behavior, relationship, opportunity, and modes of being.

As a marginal figure, an unmarried woman trapped between social classes and conceived in an unlawful union, Esther embodies a paradox of potential mobility and predetermined stasis. As the one who is "set apart" and stigmatized by virtue of her illegitimate birth, her ascription to a position beyond the boundaries of acceptable society would seem to be both preordained and intractable. But her ascension from unwanted orphan child to beloved teacher to heart of an upper middle class household reflects a new paradigm of modern possibility and self-actualization, the potential for class mobility that is born of financial prosperity. Foucault's understandings of the modern body serving the needs of capital further posit an obliteration of previous social hierarchies. Relationships once entirely dependent upon lineage and birthright now give way to the classifications of labor and money. Capital invests bodies with the power of self re-creation, albeit within certain parameters of embodied form and functioning. Thus, within the standardizing and regulating paradigm of the gigantic city, there exists not only the potential

for the deformation of public and private bodies but also the possibility of progress, the hope of a reformation actuated and authorized by the privileges of capital.

Esther's social mobility should not be ascribed entirely to the forces of a rapidly industrializing, money-based society, however. While it is true that Esther enjoys the empowering privileges of capital, these derive from her sponsorship by her wealthy guardian, John Jarndyce, rather than through the assimilability and productivity of her own body. On the contrary, Esther's most potent instrument in the self-actualizing project is precisely that characteristic which renders her body wholly unincorporable: her disfigurement. As has been previously touched upon, the standardization which the modern subject undergoes in the process of discipline enables the virtual disappearance of the physical body. It is no coincidence that the mid-nineteenth century saw the advent of statistics as a primary instrument in the creation of social and scientific knowledge. Literally meaning "the science of the state" (Bashford, Introduction)**,** statistics enabled the quantification of the population according to the ostensibly infallible laws of rational empiricism. Individual bodies gave way actuarial tables and discrete subjects were consolidated into the graph of a bell curve.

While the growing influence of statistics in this period would seem to reflect a constriction, the image of the social body whittled down to the swell of the bell curve, *Bleak House* is fundamentally concerned with the impact of the curve's outliers, those figures who, for good or ill, defy assimilation into the homogenous cluster of the "average." For Dickens, such outliers are characterized by an intractable singularity, particularity, and materiality that are dangerously embedded in (and against) ideations of the norm. Most important, emblematizing the interconnectedness and inter-penetrability that lies at the root of Dickens' narrative, these outliers, in their irrefutable embodiment, both shape and are shaped by the social structure of

which they are apart. Simultaneously responsive to and disruptive of established systems, these extraordinary bodies reflect, revise, and—most vital to our purposes—*expand* the public body, its form and its function.

Dickens' revisionist project in *Bleak House*, his effort to enlarge established understandings of embodied urban subjects, their potential, and their vulnerabilities, relies upon the stark corporealization of his characters. Esther's disfigurement provides her with the same hyper-visibility that unassimilable bodies such as Jo's carry. In the novel's emphasis on her bodily suffering and disfigurement, Esther's narrative may be read as a process of coming into corporeality. The novel's early scenes do not just present Esther as a disembodied subject, they explicitly *deny* her an embodied existence. Indeed, in the first chapters of Esther's narrative, Esther herself advances of a model of her existence as both subject-less and bodiless. In recalling childhood memories of playing with her doll, Esther notes feeling that the doll is "staring at me—or not so much at me, I think, as at nothing" (24) as the young girl tells the toy her secrets. This scene echoes a previous image of disembodiment invoked when Esther describes herself standing on tiptoe to peer in her godmother's mirror while refusing to articulate what she sees there. As will be shown, Dickens' intriguing formulation suggests a tension at the base of Esther's narrative, a struggle to achieve an embodied subjectivity through narrative.

In a modernizing London intent upon producing an "average" subject amenable to normative measurements of bodily functioning and appearance, anomalous bodies were, also like Jo, radically unassimilable. For Foucault, exclusionary practices are grounded upon embodied individuation: "Individualize the excluded but use procedures of individualization to mark exclusion….Induce…a state of conscious and permanent visibility" (199, 201). In falling outside the bell curve, these subjects resisted the forces of incorporation and indifferentiation, retaining

bodily integrity even if through stigmatization. Thus the Esther whose body was overshadowed by the light of Ada's ostensibly greater beauty and invoking no comment on its own becomes in the wake of her illness the repeated center of attention, the catalyst of speculation, validation, and, sometimes, rejection. Indeed, Dickens places great importance on these scenes of unveiling. More than once does Esther present her face as a sort of litmus test, her disfigurement enabling the examination of social and personal truths that would otherwise have lain hidden beneath the obfuscating protocols of custom, etiquette, and obligation. Again, Mary Douglas' analysis of danger and pollution is helpful here, "When something is firmly classified as anomalous, the outline of the set in which it is not a member is clarified" (47). Once more, transgressive, prodigious bodies become the force and the manifestation of social truths, unearthing subterranean forces by superseding (and shattering) cultural limits, requirements, and expectations.

Thus removed by virtue of her disfigurement from traditional marriage plots, Esther becomes the anomalous figure whose insistent embodiment and radical displacement helps to illuminate the system in which it has no place. As Rosemarie Garland-Thomson has argued in her analysis of nineteenth century American sentimental fiction, reformist novels operate upon a binary of dis/embodiment, as white middle class heroines achieve corporeal transcendence by problematizing and inflating the physicality of those for whom they provide care (*Extraordinary Bodies* 93). Esther's scarring places her at the center of a recurring theme of sentiment and sympathy as the characters surrounding her manifest their true nature in reaction to her changed face. Replicating and expanding upon a scene in which Richard watches Ada weep over the body of Jenny's dead infant, declaring the image "most beautiful," Esther's repeated unveilings clarify the extent of the other characters' capacity for sympathy and sensibility, revealing Guppy's

callousness while emphasizing the nobility of John Jarndyce and Alan Woodcourt (see also Holmes Stoddard, *Fictions of Affliction*). Thus, unable to accommodate established norms of female embodiment and no longer adequate to predefined female middle class roles within the marriage paradigm, Esther becomes the instrument and opportunity for those around her to demonstrate their moral and social worth. Her amplified physicality—her scars providing an inflated and intractable signification of her suffering—invites and legitimates these overblown expressions of sentiment and sympathy.

Transgressive, anomalous bodies enjoy this power to clarify the social structure by virtue of their analogousness to "normal" systems. Derived from eighteenth century natural philosophy, "freaks of nature" draw much of their fascination from the widespread belief that natural law may be discerned most clearly through the analysis of its aberrations. Crucial to this discussion is the extent to which Esther's deviant status informs and is informed by the matriculations of her body in space. Her infection is the result of breached social, economic, and physical boundaries. The pestilential airs and dangerous bodies of Tom-All-Alone's recognize and are contained by no demarcations of geography, gender, or class. Her body's surfaces, having been breached, now carry the indelible marks of its transgression.

Above all else, *Bleak House* is a monstrous text *about* monstrous bodies: similar to prodigious bodies like Daniel Lambert's whose excessive corporeality materialize a multitude of latent fears and desires—of consumption, expansion, and the limits and possibilities of power—Dickens' swelling text narrativizes a corollary clash of objects, anxieties, and agendas. Perhaps more important, Dickens deploys Esther's scarred body to articulate obscure and disconcerting social truths. Like the Enlightenment freak of nature that illuminated the workings of natural law, Esther's sickness does more than occasion the revelation of moral truths in those around her; it

also materializes hidden social machinations. Juxtaposed with Sir Leiceister's "aristocratic" gout, Esther's smallpox reveals the leveling influences operating in an environment of profound social change. Embodied hierarchies of pleasure and pain, exemplified by Sir Leicester's inflamed leg, give way to the egalitarian infectiousness of smallpox.

Dickens' counterpositioning of these two taxonomies of disease articulates on the level of the body in pain new economies of social functioning. The scarifications of opportunistic, indiscriminate, infectious disease displace the identifying stigmata of diseases of hereditary opulence and leisure. More significantly, Dickens employs the equalizing effects of epidemic smallpox to enlarge and expand individual bodies even as it affirms the materiality of those bodies. Esther's scars become eternal signifiers of the body's vulnerability, permeability, and mutability. It literally "bodies forth" a profound transformation in the social structure, the embodied subject's place within that structure, and the relationships of bodies with other bodies.

The transition from ascribed to acquired illness writes on the level of the flesh a new narrative of society—one in which both the body and its social role are mutable, less responsive to the preconditions of birth as in the patrician sufferings of gout than to the changing conditions of environment and circumstance. For Dickens, then, not only is the social body a reflection in large of the human body, but the human body also serves as a microcosm of the social, literally embodying on the level of the individual subject the reality of the public realm. Esther's enlarged physicality, its capacity to absorb and reflect the social body, operates for Dickens as a form of collective self-disclosure, implicating social systems in the making and remaking of material bodies. In a moment informed by the general erasure of the body, its standardization, incorporation, and interchangeability within a mechanized industrial economy, such insistence

upon the flesh constitutes an important reversal of hegemony's efforts to naturalize, obscure, and disavow the material effects of such social change.

Significantly, however, as Alison Bashford has shown in her analysis of public health policies in Imperial Britain, the disfiguring scars of smallpox place infection survivors in an unprecedented social condition, that of the "safe but impure." For Bashford, growing cognizance of the smallpox incubation period rendered unmarked bodies suspect, their seeming purity potentially belying a dangerous contagiousness. Vaccination and pox scars signal impurity, that the body's borders have already been broken and its internal structures fundamentally and forever altered by the contaminating presence. However, only in the presence of such markers of contamination can the body's benignity be assured. Bashford equates this "safe but impure" status with a corollary freedom of movement; the immune subject is not constrained by boundaries imposed by quarantine, class, or tradition. He may enter the infectious hospital; she may walk with impunity into the brickmaker's hovel. Thus, disfigurement enlarges even as it transforms, expanding the scope of mobility, access, and capability beyond "normal" limits. It is within such a context, then, that Esther's description of her illness as having grown too large is best understood: such transgression and excess cannot occur without the disfiguring of the body, placing it beyond the constraints of the structure which defines and limits the operation of the "normal."

Such unprecedented freedom of mobility occasioned by the transfiguration of the body through infectious illness is another vital factor in Dickens' effort to revise understandings of the physical body, the social structure, and the embodied subject's place within it. Sir Leicester's suffering pivots upon a paradigm of bodily integrity: the boundaries of the body are secure, its destiny contained within it as a function of its birthright. This body is static, predictable, and

permanent, embodying a stable and stratified social system that no longer obtained during the breakneck industrialization and class mobility of *Bleak House*'s England. Conversely, Esther's marked flesh memorializes the incorporation of exogenous forces within the confines of her body, affirms the permeability, excess, and expansiveness of that body, and authorizes that body's continued refusal of antiquated social roles, standards, and functioning.

Monstrous Singularity and Insistent Embodiment

The revelatory potential of the deviant body is not without its own power to conceal, however, and, for Dickens, it is in this complex interplay between assertion and obfuscation that the liberatory potential of embodied aberrance is maximized. Before her illness, Esther wears her aunt's condemning words to her as a child, "you are your mother's disgrace and she is yours" (26), like the veil with which her mother is synonymous. Each time that Esther sees her mother, she is stricken by a shock of recognition, as though she were "looking into a broken mirror," but it is a relationship she can neither recognize, acknowledge, or assert until any trace of that resemblance has been erased. Esther's disfigurement precipitates Lady Dedlock's confession of their relationship while simultaneously rendering such a confession harmless. Corporeal manifestations of physical relationships have given way to embodied singularity. Esther's first thought upon hearing her mother's confession is to feel "a burst of gratitude to the providence of God that I was so changed as that I never could disgrace her by any trace of likeness" (535).

Esther's fevered dreams presage and illuminate in important ways the reassuring singularity of appearance accorded to her by her illness, the transgression of her body's boundaries activating an individualizing metamorphosis through corporeal transformation. At the height of her illness, Esther' dream of a burning necklace, of which she is one of the beads (514),

and her fervent desire to be removed from the strand strikingly suggests a desire for individuation. Critics have long interpreted this dream to signify a maternal refusal, marking Lady Dedlock's association with jewelry and Dickens' comparison of Chesney Wold to a "world wrapped in jeweler's cotton" (14). These interpretations are appropriate, since Esther's disfigurement specifically distances her from the mother to whom she is a danger. An equally important understanding of this sequence, however, is the fact that such a loss of lineage frees Esther from infamy and activates a process of self-actualization. A bead which is removed from the strand no longer has instrumental value; having no predefined space and no proximal relationship with anything beyond itself, it exists solely as a function of its physical being.[18]

Such also was the nature of prodigies of nature in Victorian culture (O'Connor 169, 175). Without a preexisting social role and possessing no instrumental value in a rapidly industrialized space not built for bodies such as theirs, they are dehistoricized and, in utilitarian terms, superfluous: their value and their subjectification reside in and derive from the fact of their embodied materiality, their capacity for objectification (Ibid.). Having evolved from a child with no reflection in the mirror, an invisible essence telling unheard stories to her doll, Esther's singular embodiment manifests a unique subjectivity previously unavailable to her. Her repeated unveilings replicate in small the exhibitions of freaks and giants, whose fame and fortune resided solely in their ability to advertise themselves as unprecedented, wholly unique. More important still, as another famous Irish Giant, Patrick O'Brien (formerly Cotter), exemplified in changing

[18] While such processes of individuation play a vital role in Dickens' project in *Bleak House*, these concerns do not undermine or disrupt the author's primary concern, as will be shown, with interconnectedness. For Dickens, individuation appears to be a function of two related processes: the rejection of preexisting, constraining, and defunct classificatory systems (i.e. Esther's ascription to the social margins based on her illegitimacy; the growing obsolescence of aristocratic taxonomies exemplified by Sir Leicester's gout being subsumed by the "democratic" infectiousness of smallpox) and the refusal of the homogenizing forces of contemporary industrial society. For Dickens, the return to the materiality of the suffering, the desiring, the volitional, and the metamorphic body individuates and particularizes discrete subjects even as it informs, authorizes, and furthers connections between such bodies.

his name and fabricating a lineage deriving from an ancient mythological Celtic king, Brien Boreau, in erasing all traces of family resemblance and social origin[19] the giant could create his own ancestral myth. Indeed, his success on exhibition tours frequently depended upon the creation of a sensational story[20] (McHold 21-23).

While Esther's disfigurement positions her as a singular figure, resisting modern forces of homogenization and departicularization, her intractable corporeality does retain important vestiges of her parental inheritance insofar as that body is associated with fleshly desire. Juxtaposed with the rational operations of the Enlightenment mind, Cartesian mind/body duality reads embodiment as the locus of irrational drives. Esther's extraordinary and incorporable body marks her as pure flesh inasmuch as her disfigurements bring to the fore the reality of the ineradicable vulnerability, penetrability, and changeability of the human body. Attendant with this knowledge, however, is a more indecipherable message, communicable only to a select few, regarding the true nature of Esther's parentage. Esther telegraphs the truth of her maternal lineage in a number of ways, not only in the natural development of her face but also in her practices of dress and movement. Esther's ubiquitous veil mirrors, displaces, and remakes Lady Dedlock's person into Esther's own image. Similarly, in the marks of her illness, Esther carries the legacy of her father, in whom the disease originates. Thus, father and mother meet on the surfaces of Esther's body, leaving permanent but largely untranslatable traces in the flesh of their child.

[19] Importantly, the erasure of origin typically did not extend to classifications of "race" and ethnicity. Giants and other so-called freaks were frequently subjected to prevailing racial and/or ethnic taxonomies.

[20] As will be shown, this project of self-(re)creation relies in important ways upon access to language, however. Jo's illiteracy, vagrancy, and poverty render him incapable of deploying socially authorized forms of language (hence the emphasis on Jo's dialect) that would enable him to transform the prevailing paradigm of displacement-as-destruction/death associated with him into the displacement-as-self-(re)creation as experienced by Esther.

This tension between social readings of the deviant body as enigma and as revelation in *Bleak House* signals important shifts in the understanding and uses of human variation beginning in the 1850s. Operating upon Enlightenment suppositions of the instrumental value of the "freak of nature" in illuminating natural laws, the marks of lineage Esther carries on her body furthers empirical renderings of natural bodies as explicable and translatable. Significantly, this legibility is only available to those who possess a privileged corpus of knowledge derived either from personal intimacy or professional expertise. Even more important, however, is the fact that it is the professional men, Inspector Bucket and Mr. Tulkinghorn, who correctly decipher the language of Esther's embodiment even before her loved ones do. Indeed, Tulkinghorn's knowledge precedes even Esther's self-understanding. This rendering of the body as both knowable and cryptic, a storehouse of information to which only a small body of specialists holds the key, anticipates the growing influence of professional discourses, particularly the medico-scientific, which distance the body from its relational context—thereby weakening the authority of individual, felt experience and the claims of the embodied subject's intimate partners. *Bleak House* appeared at an historical moment in which individual bodies were increasingly co-opted into ostensibly impersonal, disinterested discourses that appropriated unto themselves the singular authority to define and direct the embodied subject.

Dickens resists the homogenizing and dematerializing forces at play in a rapidly industrializing England, however, by insisting upon the stark materiality of the human subject. The empathy with which he treats marginalized subject and the pains to which he goes to articulate their suffering on the level of wounded flesh imply a forceful rejection of burgeoning social Darwinist discourses which would advance a deterministic (and ultimately eugenicist) reading of corruption, degeneracy, and danger in these marked bodies. From the rendering of

Jo's agonizing death throes as he succumbs to smallpox to the graphic illustrations of her husband's violence on Jenny's brutalized face, the bodily desecrations of *Bleak House*'s most pitiable characters are social, not natural, in origin. Thus, Dickens substitutes for the probing of the natural philosopher the scrutiny of the social scientist in order to advance a redemptive paradigm actuated through the curative forces of realist fiction.

The distinction between the competing agendas of social and natural science is critical to understanding Dickens' multiform rendering of Esther's body, its meaning, use, and value. As will be shown in greater detail later, Dickens' act of granting Esther a narrative voice equal to that of the dispassionate, presumably objective, and ostensibly male third person narrator valorizes subject-centered discourse, undercutting the growing prestige accorded to increasingly subject-less empirical paradigms. Dickens' insistence on a subject-oriented discourse places primary emphasis not upon biological and physical laws but upon the function of the individual within her social sphere, the machinations of social systems, and their impact upon personal and collective human bodies.

Bleak House's dual narrative structure, therefore, seems to mirror the increasingly dualistic nature of social discourse, the bifurcation of narratological paradigms into discrete camps of disinterested, rationalist science and imaginative, subjective art. As Jason Daniel Tougaw has argued in his *Strange Cases: The Medical Case History and the British Novel*, such a dual structure has a long precedent in medical case history writing, which traditionally incorporated both the objective language of science and the emotive narration of literary fiction. However, Tougaw notes that, from the mid-century on, physicians, spurred by solidifying notions of "medical distance", increasingly deployed objectivist writing strategies in drafting case histories. Private names, personal information, and patient self-reporting increasingly gave

way to a specialized discourse derived from the physician's own reading of the patient's body, his translations of the body's signals according to an established lexicon of diagnoses, prognoses, signs, and classifications to which he alone has access. Thus, particularities of the patient—not only her name but, often, her unique articulation of the experience of her suffering—are erased. In their place are substituted a library of knowledge accumulated through the conglomeration of anonymous bodies amassed, examined, described, and discursively constructed by medical and scientific professionals.

Written at an historical moment when the separation between empirical/professional discourse and literary narration was not yet complete, *Bleak House*'s dialogic structure replicates this contest between subject-centered and objective/empirical discursive paradigms. Viewed from this perspective, then, the complex marriage plot with which Esther is involved assumes dramatic new resonance. Dickens not only supplies a subjective narrative to balance and often indeed to undercut the omniscient third person narrator, his choice of a woman who at the time of her coming to voice occupies a curiously hybrid position—she is a married woman presumably removed from the marital structure by virtue of her disfigurement—emphasizes the limits of abstract scientific generalizations, the failure of the rule of averages to reflect the full range of human variation and the enormous complexity of private individuation. Dickens' deploys this ostensibly contradictory predicament in order to illuminate important truths about the material human body: not only is this body a vulnerable one, subject to the deformations and injuries inherent in an unjust social system, but this body is also volitional and desiring, responsive to but never wholly determined by external influences. For Dickens, the individual subject is not, cannot, and should not be the product of outside authorities or exogenous forces alone.

As a love child, Esther is the result of an extra-legal union, the outcome of physical desire rather than of any marital reproductive imperative. That Esther may herself be cognizant of and perhaps receptive to such connotations is suggested in scenes of private self-observation. As Esther steels herself to confront her reflection in the mirror for the first time since her illness, she first lets down her hair, making a curtain through which she may observe her changed image piecemeal. Esther performs a similar action when important life events or critical decisions force her to reflect again upon her altered appearance, such as when she meditates on John Jarndyce's marriage proposal. As Cecil Helman notes, hair is not only associated with sexual desire (and, in particular, with women's desire and desirability) but also with animality: "At these outer fringes of human society, where humanity ends and the wilderness begins," Helman argues, "men and animals seem to blur together, their coarse pelts woven into the same ancient, seamless texture" (ch. 5). Hair is both a link to and a reminder of humanity's animal origins, a throwback to the pre-rational compulsions of the flesh. Esther's hair not only metonymically recreates her status as the incarnation of extra-social desire, it also *validates* her ambiguous position. In her disfigurement and anomalous state, she is both pure (desiring) body and outcast from the system which regulates and authorizes the legal union of bodies. Helman's analysis of the hybrid status of hair, its invocation of the union of the animal and the human, provides rich insight into these scenes; Esther's flowing hair further marks her as not fully amenable to the ideals and the constraints of Victorian womanhood.

As an emblem of the desire and desirability that exceed the boundaries of civilized conduct and explode the limitations of human sociability, these scenes operate in moments in which an insistent, desiring corporeality conflicts with moral and social imperatives and obligations. Specifically, Esther's letting down her hair before first confronting her image is a

profound assertion of embodied existence in the midst of profoundly changed social expectations. She affirms the presence and the relevance of her body even as she acknowledges that that body no longer has a place within the social structure. Similarly, when she repeats the act before accepting John Jarndyce's marriage proposal, she asserts the deviant body's continued sexual desire (for Alan Woodcourt)—a transgressive longing she attempts to remediate by accepting the proposal. Thus, the double marriage plot serves two critical purposes here. First, it dismantles delimiting paradigms of marriagability which circumscribe desirability within a narrow limit of female embodiment. Second, it privileges even as validates the desires of "deviant" flesh. Significantly, the affirmation of Esther's continued sexual desire in the face of a radically altered embodiment frustrates the natural and biological scientists who would read the subject's internal reality through signs inscribed on the patient's flesh, as well as Dickens' own beloved social reformers, whose moral codes paradoxically predicate the same homogenized and dematerialized view of the human subject as that required by industrialization. In contrast to evolutionary theorists, social engineers, and interventionist scientists alike, Dickens proposes a dynamic, fluid, and multivalent relationship between embodiment and will, a complex inter-penetrability of body and spirit, in which the one is incessantly constructing, dismantling, and restructuring the other. Esther's continued sexual desire gives the lie to rational science's presumption to know and to predict the subject's nature and her capacities while also asserting in defiance of moral reformers an ineradicable yearning inherent in embodied subjects, the unpredictable longings of the flesh that cannot be contained or denied by the most advanced social systems.

This tension between fleshly pleasure and the cultural strictures which disavow it mirrors a pervading unease extant in mid-Victorian England, as Britons struggled to define themselves,

their role, and their responsibility within a vastly changed social structure. As the material, volitional, and capricious elements of an industrialized empire unprecedented in human history, Victorian Britons found themselves incorporated into the body of a social giant whose nature, purpose, and destiny were largely unknown and ungovernable. It is no coincidence, then, that Britons who were themselves so many constituent cells in a political and military body of monstrous proportions should find in the figure of the giant a fetishized and fascinating figure of their collective plight[21], nor is it an accident that *Bleak House*, written at such an historical moment and manifesting both in its prodigious form and immoderate characters an equally intemperate disproportion, should mirror this obsession with the pleasures and privileges of excess. As a character whose illness—during which she felt she had "grown too large"—activates such an uneasy positioning, Esther presents a powerful fictionalization of the vexed figure of the monster of disproportion.

As Huff asserts, England's giants paint a portrait of unbridled indulgence that is both alluring and threatening (38-46). The sumptuous materiality of an ungovernable flesh corporealizes a tension at the heart of Victorian society between the pleasures of the physical (signified for Huff in the delight in material consumption) body and the moral, financial, and physiological perils of eclipsing proper boundaries. Esther's very existence embodies desire that transgresses social and moral limits, even as her disfigurement places her beyond the strictures of "normal" Victorian womanhood, the intrusive vulnerability of her inassimilable flesh exceeding the limits of proper bodily form and functioning. Likewise, the Victorian giant embodies a similar transgression, manifesting a hedonistic pleasure in shattering polite boundaries of

[21] As has been noted, the privatization of the body in the Victorian era, its accessibility only to those in positions of professional power (physicians and biological scientists, foremost, but also those possessing legal, juridical, and political power—the collectors of forensic evidence or the enforcers of public codes) was attended by a proportionate fetishization of deviant bodies. The somatization of cultural desires, fears, anxieties, and questions is a hallmark of Victorian England.

moderation and proportion. For giants of obesity, such as Charles Lambert, prodigious size, no matter the physiological cause, embodied the anxious desires of Victorians coming to grips with an abundance that had been unimaginable before modernization, British colonization, and global trade. Glutted not only on an superfluity of food, commodities, and leisure time but also on the heady surplus of economic, political, and military power, Britons struggled to strike a balance between enjoyment and excess, dreaming of the pleasure of limitless consumption while dreading the specter of Daniel Lambert, the terror of a desire that, once unleashed, knows no restraint except in its own hedonistic self-destruction.

Contagious Narratives/Deforming Discourses

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault asserts that the presence of an anomalous body activates a host of discursive practices bent upon the subjugation and disciplining of such bodies through their cooptation into the field of writing. Likewise, Athena Vrettos contends that illness is a fundamental catalyst to storytelling, instigating a narratological imperative that simultaneously domesticates disease and disorder and renders them contagious. Operating within the Victorian construct of "sympathy" auditors of such narratives are made vulnerable to the very sicknesses described to them by virtue of their emotional attachment. Such natural sympathy, therefore, invests those who write and speak about illness with a potent ability to alter not only the patient's but also the social body.

Viewed from this perspective, *Bleak House* may be read as an attempt to gain productive control over a monstrous narrative. As Tougaw has noted, a primary impetus of British fiction has been the diagnosis and cure of "diseased" texts. Comparing the medical case history with the modern British novel, he asserts that the nearly contemporaneous rise of the seemingly

antithetical genres reveals a complementary objective at stake in both: to model and advance a view of subjects (both fictional and real) that is at once informative—through Enlightenment-based principles of observation and diagnosis—and humane, invoking Victorian paradigms of sympathy and fellow-feeling.

Bleak House's convoluted plot structure, which has received so much critical censure since the novel's serialization, represents the sort of prodigious diegesis Tougaw describes. As has been noted, perhaps the most significant motive underlying the novel is the effort to discern and articulate the hidden connections between characters and events. For Dickens, the apparent fragmentation at play in the novel is a debilitating fiction which obscures the malignancies endangering the entire social body. *Bleak House*'s rhetorical question, "What connexion can there be between the place in Lincolnshire, the house in town, the Mercury in powder, and the whereabouts of Jo" (235), is of paramount importance to the text's underlying motivations. As J. Hillis Miller has shown, Dickens' text is primarily invested in demonstrating that the distance is negligible indeed.

Within Dickens' reformist fiction, England (and particularly London) is both contaminated and contaminating, subject to a process of examination, diagnosis, and (narratological) cure. Esther's narrative plays a vital role in mirroring such a project of national self-discovery and healing. The process of Esther's coming into her body in the wake of her illness operates as a function of narrative-making. In effect, Esther *writes* herself into embodiment, revising the terms of Foucault's disciplined body by herself defining the terms through which her body is constructed. By controlling the reader's access to her body, Esther sets the limits and the terms of her self-disclosure, even as she uses the investigatory power of

her liminal social position and aberrant embodiment to diagnose the true nature of the social body and the individuals who both inhabit and construct it.

For Mary Douglas, liminality enjoys a particular relationship on the boundaries between the articulate and the inarticulate, for, according to Douglas, liminal figures operate outside civilized space, in an extra-social realm that is beyond order and outside law. This is the fertile and dangerous space beyond language: "The man who comes back from the inaccessible regions brings with him a power not available to those who have stayed in control of themselves and of society" (118). For Douglas, the power with which such liminal spaces are invested is foremost a linguistic one. The transgressor brings from outlaw spaces a capacity to articulate the formlessness she encountered there, to create of the disorder new discursive, conceptual, and social paradigms which simultaneously illuminate and explode the old orders.

Esther's narrative effectively replicates the novel's larger structure and informing motive. *Bleak House* deploys its own monstrosity—the disintegrating, contaminating, and disfiguring influences of the giant city—to write its own counternarrative. The effort to wrest hidden connections from the murk of the obfuscating fog, to make visible the natural body amid the obscurity of an all-encompassing mud, is simultaneously an effort of self-creation through narrative. In a lovely depiction of the view from Esther's room at Bleak House, Esther describes the countryside as it comes into view from her bedroom window in the morning light:

> As the prospect gradually revealed itself and disclosed the scene over which the wind had wandered in the dark, like my memory over my life (during Esther's illness), I had pleasure in discovering the unknown objects that had been around me in my sleep. At first, they were very faint in the mist….And that pale interval over, the picture began to enlarge and fill up so fast that at every peep I could have found enough to look at for an hour. (105)

This process of bringing to light that which is hidden but omnipresent is key. The gradual revelation of the landscape surrounding Esther, with its discrete but interconnected constituent parts, echoes the novel's primary agenda in first undoing the twin processes of homogenization and departicularization attending industrial modernity and then identifying the necessarily interdependent relationships between disparate elements. This process affirms singularity and the integrity of individual forms even as it contextualizes them, placing them in a dialectical relationship which acknowledges the amorphous and environmentally responsive nature of social bodies and the overarching system they constitute.

In *Bleak House,* the imperative to define, differentiate, and acknowledge the integrity of discrete, material bodies is foremost an attempt to combat the novel's most pernicious and potent social institution: Chancery Court. Inspired by so-called "monstrous" cases receiving rampant attention in the years preceding the novel's serialization, Chancery mirrors the prodigious and pernicious growth to which London as a whole is subject. Like London's labyrinthine streets, being caught up in Chancery is to be embroiled in a discombobulating, deforming hell, one which takes the individual away from himself, transforming both his private self and personal relationships into perversions of their true nature.

The rift between John Jarndyce and Richard Carstone—as well as the latter's tragic end—transforms the destructive forces of such gargantuan social institutions into a cautionary tale. Nameless spectators scrutinize Richard as he paces the courtyard of Chancery, on the alert for the inevitable physical alterations that signal the internal deformations wrought by the court, noting "the like bent head, the bitten nail, the lowering eye, the lingering step, the purposeless and dreamy air, the good consuming and consumed, the life turned sour…Chancery, which knows no wisdom but in precedent is very rich in such precedents" (582). Significantly, in

warning Esther not to condemn Richard for his degeneration, John Jarndyce invokes the language of contagion: "I would rather restore poor Rick to his proper nature than be endowed with all the money that dead suitors, broken heart and soul…have left unclaimed….(But) it is in the subtle poison of such abuses to breed such diseases. His blood is infected and objects lose their natural aspects in his sight" (517). In this instance, the homogenizing processes of Chancery engender and perpetuate the social ills they would presume to cure. Richard is just one in a succession of nameless "precedents," diseased, deformed, and destroyed by the senseless momentum of an impersonal force.

Importantly, however, this force functions primarily through language, symbolized by the seemingly endless boxes of documents that simultaneously contain and perpetuate the inscrutable suit. Referring specifically to medical texts, Foucault describes such processes as "the formation of a whole series of codes of disciplinary individuality that made it possible to transcribe, by means of homogenization, the individual features established by the examination" (*Punish* 189). Similarly, Bashford argues that the production of documents of information enabled the creation of populations, the consolidation of groups into a discrete, measurable, and describable aggregate amenable to study, correction, and control:

> This 'writing' of the epidemic—its conversion and abstraction into information, statistics, a 'natural history,' maps, graphs, and figures, was one rationality of government which rendered the epidemic visible and apparently controllable. And it was but one technique for the constitution and management of population. (ch. 2)

The relevance of Foucault's and Bashford's analyses of medical writing to Chancery Court derives from Foucault's understanding of the interrelated mechanisms and purposes informing the rise of professional disciplines from the mid-nineteenth century. For Foucault, the disciplines

constitute a field of knowledge, constructed by and through discourse, in the service of power/knowledge. Thus, like the victims of the epidemic whose bodies are linguistically dematerialized and remade through the abstract markings of specialized, professional symbolic systems, Richard and the other Jarndyce suitors are similarly departicularized and abstracted, their embodied individuality transformed into the homogenizing, intangible language of Chancery Law.

The laughter with which the ancillary players greet the settling of the Chancery suit is both absurd and disavowing, the ultimate barrenness of the suit disclosed in the revelation that all of the contested funds have been consumed in the process of litigation. Such a revelation exemplifies that novel's assertion that Chancery exists only for itself. To sustain and legitimize its own incessant growth, it generates an unlimited and self-authorizing discourse, making and remaking itself in an endlessly circular process of argument and counterargument, suit and countersuit. The prodigious growth of the Chancery monster operates through a process of corporeal destruction. Like the fog and mud which erase individual identities and obscure the boundaries of discrete selves, embodied persons are consumed by a field of writing. Thus, Ms. Flite, with her omnipresent documents, may be seen withering away before Esther's very eyes in her poverty, her anxiety, and her faithful attendance at court. Thus, Gridley can undergo a fatal physical collapse "within an hour," bodying forth the havoc being wrought upon him by Chancery from within through the ultimate destruction of that body. Thus, Tom Jarndyce can make a performance of his self-annihilation, putting a bullet in his brain before a crowd of spectators at court. Thus, Richard Carstone, vomiting blood, gives up the ghost amid the encircling arms of loved ones, while Krook breathes fire and disintegrates into an inhuman goo.

The horror of Chancery rests in its capacity to transform the material bodies of subjects into the abstract discourse of a merciless, unstoppable, and inhuman power. However, Dickens' unique dual narrative structure advances a view of language that is as redemptive as it is destructive. Within this framework, the simultaneously explanatory and recuperative powers of illness play a unique role. As Vrettos argues in her *Somatic Fictions: Imagining Illness in Victorian Culture*, sickness is inevitably attended by an interpretive paradigm that is both illuminating and potentially destructive. To speak of illness is always already a potentially transgressive act, for such articulations carry with them a strong capacity to alter the social and natural worlds in which they are spoken. Echoing Mary Douglas' reading of liminality, Vrettos' understanding of traditions of compulsory silence attending modern professional medical care derives from the belief that "to talk of diseases is…potentially and dangerously transformative….To speak of illness is to replicate, linguistically, the process of its transmission from one subject to another" (2).

Contagion illuminates the paradoxical relationships of bodies in social space, for illness particularizes the subject in the individual, corporeal signs of his or her sickness while simultaneously emphasizing the body's porosity: "Medical, social, and literary representations of illness reflect Victorian beliefs related to the self, the body, and its relationship *to place, culture, and community*….(Illness) highlighted the necessary publicity of the body" (Ibid., 3, 5; emphasis added). While Vrettos correctly uses this process to emphasize the deconstruction of embodied boundaries in contagion, the capacity of infectious disease to rescue embodied subjects from the fog of an interchangeable incorporeality operates as a form of social mapping, marking both the connections and the boundaries between bodies in the flesh of its subjects. Thus, in articulating contagion, the speaker simultaneously perpetuates it, launching a discourse of bodily and social

transformation that spreads from person to person like the virus of which they speak, infecting individual subjects with a transmogrified vision of the public body that fundamentally and irrevocably alters that body.

It is no coincidence that Dickens chooses Esther to provide the second voice in *Bleak House*'s unique dual narrative. This multiple narrative illustrates Dickens' attempt to conceptualize and define London, a city which transcends and frustrates any one perspective of it. In *Bleak House,* however, the impersonal and singular perspective is not only incomplete and erroneous, it is also a menace. Esther's personal, highly subjective narrative, therefore, must be understood as an oppositional strategy deployed by Dickens to invoke a return to materiality and the body. If, in this formulation, Chancery is to be viewed as an infectious discourse, destroying health and home, then Esther's narrative is invested with the potential to both restore and inoculate.

The description is significant, for it is the insistent corporeality of her marked and compromised body that activates and legitimates her narrative. Like the smallpox victim and her vaccinated counterpart, Esther is authorized to enter social and narratological spaces which the "unmarked" cannot. Moreover, galvanized by a status that is always already superfluous, her consciousness from her earliest childhood of "filling a space in (her) godmother's house that ought to have been empty" (27), Esther is the liminal figure to whom social strictures do not and cannot apply. Unimpeded by "polite" discourse, unencumbered by the structure to which she is excessive, Esther's is a particularized discourse of the material body that restores individuality to bodies departicularized by the abstractions of Chancery. From the extra-social spaces of her own outlawed embodiment Esther draws a spectacularly physical language to counteract and destroy the monstrous abstractions of Chancery.

It is no coincidence, then, that Esther and Tulkinghorn are both associated with keys, for they are both invested with the authority and the capacity to enter spaces which are prohibited to ordinary persons. Significantly, Tulkinghorn's keys grant access to drawers in which repose multitudes of Chancery documents. Esther's keys, however, open doors, granting access to rooms in which physical bodies live, move, and have their being. It may be that *Bleak House* is, fundamentally, a novel about sound housekeeping. In a book obsessed with the physical structure of houses, their capacity to metonymically reflect and reveal the internal lives of those who live in and among them, the second Bleak House enjoys particular symbolic significance. It retains the physical aberrations manifest in the original Bleak House, replete with interlocking rooms and hallways leading nowhere, glorying in an irregularity that materializes both excess and interconnection. But the anomalousness of the second Bleak House is tempered; it is smaller than its namesake, exhibiting a proportion and moderation unknown to all things connected with and deformed by Chancery.

For Dickens, the second Bleak House, with Esther as its mistress, offers a potent corrective to the deformations wrought by the pernicious influences of the prodigious city and the destructive abstractions of professional discourse. Galvanized by a view of England as entropic, merciless, depersonalized, and recklessly expansive, Dickens provides a hybridized domestic space that is responsive to changing social conditions without falling victim to them. Its carnivalesque architecture is restrained and rendered manageable by its reduced size, suggesting the delight and transformative potential inherent in a tempered transgression, the explosion of defunct systems mitigated by the imposition of relevant new boundaries. That the second Bleak House is a modest home situated within sight of the monstrous city affirms the vital interconnectedness of the vast social body and its discrete but nevertheless constituent elements.

Critics have been skeptical of the seemingly pastoral ending, rejecting Dickens' too easy substitution of an urban hell with the fragile Eden of a Victorian household headed by a wounded but unbroken angel of the house. When examined within the context of excess, transgression, infection, and cure, however, the novel's resolution may be seen to do important work in the text's informing impulse and narrative trajectory. If, as George Meredith suggests, London is a Daniel Lambertian city--ponderous, confounding, unprecedented, and powerful yet threatened by virtue of its own excess—it also retains the capacity of being an Esther Summerson, harnessing excess to create new modes of being, substituting a vital and desirous corporeality for the fatal abstractions of impersonal systems, and taming the profligate urbanization of the growing industrial empire through the moderating influences of a revisionist domestic space. Headed by a fully embodied, marked, desiring, and self-actualizing woman—the product of the infectious city and of the blending of social orders—the eclecticism of the home designed by and for her provides a model for the social body to which it is linked and from which it is derived. In a novel in which material dwellings metonymically reflect their inhabitants, the home's paradoxically harmonious conjoining of irreconcilable elements mirrors the hybrid, incompatible, and rebellious body of its mistress, a body whose scarification emblematizes transgression as clearly as did Daniel Lambert's prodigious size.

Simultaneously, however, like the household accoutrements that continued to fascinate audiences long after Lambert's death, the second Bleak House imposes order on chaos, materializing a functional, purposive, and thoughtful domesticity on a radically altered landscape. Thus arises a mode of being that recognizes, supports, and celebrates newfound truths of corporeal existence and the revitalized strategy of homemaking that they validate and authorize. In a period of unimaginable and rapidly accelerating industrialization and imperial

expansion, Dickens' *Bleak House* presents an urgent call in the face of reckless growth: a society careless of the truths of its material existence and the consequences of its unchecked excess risks the fate of the man to whom it is compared.

For Dickens, the only means to escape the ultimate fate of Daniel Lambert is a fundamental remaking of the social body, the acknowledgement of both the integrity and the inter-relationship of its subjects, the carving out of a useful space within the system for each of its discrete elements. The only way to keep the giant from crumbling beneath its own prodigious weight is to incorporate those irreconcilable elements—through education, through health care, and through progressive public policies that validate, honor, and uplift the physical as well as moral selves at home. Only in expanding and revising the social body through the affirmation, instrumentalization, and imposition of new (but thoughtfully bounded) orders on the material, individuated, multiform, and metamorphic bodies of its subjects can Imperial England—and its prodigious heart, London—ever hope to bear the weight of its own enormous growth.

Chapter 2:
Unbounded Bodies/Unbridled Blood:
Beasts Within and Beasts Without in Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde *and Stoker's* Dracula

There are mysteries which men can only guess at, which age by age they may solve only in part.
Bram Stoker

Anatomy is destiny.
Sigmund Freud

From Monstrous Cities to Monstrous Selves: Confronting the Unknown Other

Chapter one of this study examined the extraordinary embodiments of so-called "monsters of proportion" as they functioned in the high Victorian era to represent prevailing concerns over the growth and, ultimately, the exhaustion and atrophy of the British Empire. The chapter focused on Dickens' *Bleak House*, exploring the iconography of London as an urban landscape eluding, like the bodies of giants and the obese, physical boundaries. Furthermore, the chapter examined a parallel transgressiveness in the bodies of Dickens' lead characters, particularly in Esther's falling ill with smallpox, her infection symbolically requiring her body to exceed its social, class, and gendered boundaries. Esther's illness, it was argued, enacts her body's absorption of the malevolent influences of the city's underprivileged centers, as she is exposed to and forever changed by threats and contaminants from which her socioeconomic status should have shielded her. In the process, by bearing the markers of her illness on her changed flesh, she paradoxically transcends and reaffirms demarcations of femininity insofar as her scars render impossible the attainment of a threshold of physical beauty required of women (particularly "marriageable" women), even as they reinforce paradigms of the female as wholesale physicality, a physicality which renders both the female subject and the social body of which she is a part exceedingly vulnerable to contamination.

This chapter will continue to examine the links between extraordinary bodies and cultural production. Here, particular attention will be paid to the role of the professionalization of the sciences in the ideological and discursive construction of extraordinary bodies. As in chapter one, this chapter will also explore the nexus between the novel, the extraordinarily embodied

subject, and the historical context into which they come. As such, this chapter will focus on evolving social and scientific frameworks regarding conjoined twins and the pejoratively named "Hottentot" Venuses, focusing in particular on fin-de-siècle Gothic literature's reaction and contribution to these paradigms. This chapter argues that nineteenth century fascination with "Siamese" twins parallels broader cultural concerns with the nature of identity and the integrity of human consciousness. This concern is exemplified most significantly in Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, whose eponymous character(s) would ultimately come to signify the ineradicable Other within. Thus, this chapter's reading of Stevenson's novella will be situated alongside representations of famous conjoined twins, including Millie-Christine McKoy and Daisy and Violet Hilton, who, in the prevailing interpretations of their extraordinary embodiments, reflect in living reality the questions over the nature of identity and the integrity of the subject-self which Stevenson's novella fictionalizes.

Likewise, the second half of this chapter will center upon Bram Stoker's iconic gothic novel, *Dracula*, which, as this analysis will show, demonstrates a concomitant concern with the porosity of boundaries, the fear of the absorption of the Other from without. Questions of gender roles and, in particular, of the quantification and containment of sexuality which characterize *Dracula* find their true-life counterpart in nineteenth century paradigms of racial Otherness, for which black female bodies, such as that of Sarah Baartman, the so-called "Hottentot Venus," were appropriated to signify widespread fears at the turn of the century of a cultural atavism, a terror of social and racial degeneration that was projected onto the purportedly "infectious" and "vampiric" bodies of women and of racial, cultural, and ethnic Others.

The Other Within: Conjoined Twins, Double Consciousness, and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

In early May 1871, North Carolina-born conjoined twins, Millie-Christine McKoy, began their triumphant European tour, which would last nearly eight years and would encompass hundreds of thousands of spectators, including notable dignitaries, ranging from heads of state to the era's most eminent scientists and physicians. However, while it was the twins who were ostensibly on display, a telling account from *The Liverpool Ledger* describes the twins' appearance from the perspective of the spectator:

> We can testify that no person of ordinary intelligence can be in her company for half an hour without yielding to the charm of her manner and the fascination of her double smiles. She has you on both sides. If you remove your head from one position you are immediately the victim of another pair of eyes, which fix you and, in fact, transfix you. We candidly admit that we were fascinated, and that we immediately lost sight of the phenomenon and became overpowered by the influence of this double brain. (qtd. in Frost 78)

The author's account of his encounter with what he terms the "remarkable freak of nature" (Ibid.) is instructive on multiple levels. The vacillation between the first person plural and the second person suggests the destabilizing of the authorial identity, with the lines separating writer from reader in constant flux, the authorial identity consistently merging with and separating itself from that of the audience. Significantly, even as the author presents a subjectivity distinct from that of the audience, the invocation of the first person plural suggests a composite identity, the author denying himself a singular subjectivity in the unsettling but alluring presence of those "double smiles."

The rhetorical fluidity between singular and pluralistic identity here reflects a profound ideological undercurrent at play in the second half of the nineteenth century: the interrogation of the nature of identity and a growing belief in a multiplicity at the heart of human consciousness. For the professionalized sciences and the lay public at large, the nature of individual identity was

becoming the locus of increasing interest, investigation, and concern. With Freud's growing body of work in the analysis of the human consciousness, not to mention the ever-expanding corpus of research studies conducted by scientific bodies as diverse as *The Journal of Mental Science* and *The Society for Psychical Research*, the nineteenth century's attempts to quantify and qualify human consciousness paradoxically served to mystify human identity. The increasing awareness of and concern with subconscious processes gave rise to a defamiliarized psychic self in which the individual was increasingly estranged from his/her conscious mind.[22]

Not surprisingly, this burgeoning fascination with human consciousness, the troubling and tantalizing awareness of its amorphous and multitudinous nature, was precipitated by investigations into mind-altering practices, most notably hypnotism. Drawing upon Anton Mesmer's explorations in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century of suggestive states borne of what Mesmer termed "animal magnetism," hypnotism as practiced in the *fin de siècle* represented an attempt by proto-psychologists to professionalize and medicalize the examination and exploitation of subconscious processes. The late nineteenth century saw the creation of an exhaustive body of work on hypnotic suggestion and its implications. Continental Europe gave rise to the most important figures of this movement, with the French schools of Nancy and Saltpêtrière leading the charge, though espousing competing viewpoints on the nature of

[22] As will be explored in greater detail below, a fascinating example of this are the increasing reports of so-called "double consciousness" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. "Double consciousness" refers to the emergence of an alternate personality or a "second self" most often occurring following a head injury, particularly when accompanied by loss of consciousness, or a sudden fright. Victims might live out the lives of these alternate personalities for days, weeks, or months at a time before suddenly awakening to their primary personalities, often with little or no memory of the event. The phenomena of double consciousness provoked such widespread interest at the turn of the century that they would frequently appear as lead items in *The London Times*. Indeed, reports of these events became so widespread that they attracted the attention of leading politicians, physicians, and attorneys as they sought to define the nature of the self and the extent of individual accountability amid growing questions regarding the integrity of consciousness and the volition of will. Indeed, so vexed and numerous were these concerns that, as Eigen notes in his *Unconscious Crimes: Mental Absence and Criminal Responsibility in Victorian Britain*, both the Victorian legal system and the emerging science of psychiatry found themselves playing catch up to an increasing number of defendants claiming double consciousness as the source of their criminal acts.

suggestibility. With its preeminent leader, Jean Martin Charcot, adherents of the Saltpêtrière school denied susceptibility to hypnotism for most "normal" persons, maintaining that suggestibility is a symptom of hysteria. Saltpêtrière's twinning of suggestibility and hysteria was refuted by Ambroise-August Liébault and the Nancy school, which held that not only were all human beings susceptible to hypnotism to some degree, but that hypnotic suggestion might provide an invaluable therapeutic aid for the treatment of an array of conditions, provided it were conducted at the hands of a skilled physician.[23]

The implications of the debate regarding the extent to which "normal" individuals may find themselves vulnerable to hypnotic suggestion were immeasurable, as physicians, psychologists, social scientists, and the public at large began to question the degree to which any one person could be expected to exercise control over his/her own mind. Such vexed questions led inevitably to the interrogation of the autonomous, self-possessed, and eminently self-aware Enlightenment subject. Founded upon the Cartesian split, the premise of a mind/body bifurcation in which the instrumentalized but ultimately "disembodied body" carried out the dictates of the rational mind, the Enlightenment subject, prefigured as a white, Euro-American male, literalized the Cartesian cogito, in which conscious (rational) thought became a synecdoche for personhood, simultaneously the reason for and manifestation of discrete identity. Margrit Shildrick notes that, according to this paradigm,

> To be a self is above all to be distinguished from the other, to be ordered and discrete, secure *within* the well-defined boundaries of the body rather than

[23] Questions of the nature and extent of human "suggestibility", of course, were freighted with anxiety for many Victorian Britons, for whom the possibility of the relinquishing of self-control into the hands of another was a dangerous (if not somewhat seductive) possibility. As will be shown, it was cultural Others, particularly homosexuals, aesthetes, and decadents, who were thought to possess the most potent powers of suggestion. Within this framework, unsuspecting and upright Britons could easily fall under the influence of such charismatic leaders, particularly since, as the popularization of Freud's theory of the tripartite nature of consciousness had made clear, even the most reputable of Britons could find themselves susceptible to an array of drives and urges of which s/he might never become consciously aware.

> actually being the body. Although from time to time we may experience ourselves out of the body, what rarely happens—and then it is defined as a special type of madness—is that we should either inhabit the body of another, or find our own bodies shared—invaded, we would say—by another. (50)

The quest to demarcate the boundaries of suggestibility for the normal individual, as occurred in the conflict between the Nancy and Saltpêtèrie schools, reflected growing anxiety for the increasingly destabilized trope of the Enlightenment subject. The workings of the individual body and the polymorphous mind seemed to come under the growing power of unknown forces, whether these be the symptoms of a covert psychic disease[24] or, perhaps more alarmingly, whether these were simply the natural processes of the "normal" human mind, whose "unconscious cerebrations," to borrow Stoker's famous phrase, were only just coming to light in the burgeoning field of psychological science. Stacey Abbott notes the shift in nineteenth century Gothic literature from a fear of terror from without to a fear of the terror within:

> While eighteenth century Gothic focused on the past's intrusion on the present in the form of an external threat or monster, nineteenth century Gothic was increasingly defined by internal threats and anxieties. By the late nineteenth century, any external Gothic forms still present in the genre came to embody a psychological disturbance and suggested an increasing uncertainty around individual subjectivity. (19)

The passage quoted at the start of this chapter describing Millie-Christine's visit to England, then, is set amid a rising concern with and terror of human subjectivity and, more precisely, its vulnerability both to its own multiplicity and to the compulsions of outside influence, which Thurschwell describes as "an anxious sense that someone or something might get inside one's mind and control one's actions" (37). It is within this context that the author's use of the language of hypnotic suggestion in regard to Millie-Christine takes much of its resonance. As Frost notes, the author of this passage positions himself (presumably) as *object,* not subject, of the double gaze, the unwitting (and, significantly, *feminized*) victim of an identity

[24] I use the contemporary term to denote what would now be considered mental illness or psychological disorders.

that defies Enlightenment parameters. That the author should couch his encounter with Millie-Christine in the language of hypnotism, using terms like "transfixed," "fascinated," and "overpowered" to describe his experience, demonstrates the degree to which embodiments like Millie-Christine's corporealized late nineteenth century concerns (some would say obsessions) with the nature of identity and, in particular, with the question of precisely how many selves actually make up the so-called singular Enlightenment subject.

As has been noted, the question of the integrity of the subject-self played an increasingly prominent role in the "Gothic" fiction of the end of the century as well, but the nexus between the rise of the professional sciences, particularly psychology, the exhibition of conjoined twins, and the literature of the era has been relatively unexplored. An interrogation of the Gothic fiction of the fin de siècle, however, presents invaluable insights into the ways in which the deviant bodies of "double monsters" like Millie-Christine served to manifest, authorize, and discharge anxieties regarding the nature of the discrete self. In her examinations of the biographies of Millie-Christine McKoy and the equally famous Daisy and Violet Hilton, Frost asserts that these women destabilized notions of subjectivity by presenting for display bodies and selves that delegitimize efforts at quantification. As Frost notes, while the Hiltons' efforts to redefine their corporeality were vexed at best and torturous at worst, for their earlier predecessors, the McKoys, their extraordinary embodiment enabled an important rupture with identity paradigms to which a "normal" corporeality would have consigned them. Born into slavery in pre-emancipation North Carolina, the McKoy sisters were always already Othered, excluded from the Enlightenment ideal by virtue of sex and, most importantly, race. Their extraordinary embodiment, paradoxically, instigated for the sisters and their family a level of autonomy virtually unheard of in the antebellum American south. Their biography reads like a nineteenth

century adventure tale, encompassing stories of kidnappings, rescues, and reunions with the beneficent white protectors to whom they would be forever indebted for returning them to the welcoming arms of a loving mother.

While the veracity of these accounts leaves much room for skepticism, what is most telling here is the degree to which the McKoys' story unsettles grand narratives regarding the black, female body in pre-Civil War America. In a social structure predicated upon the systematic dismantling of the black family and the perpetuation of oppression through financial and political disenfranchisement, the monstrous body of Millie-Christine catalyzed a dramatic re-envisioning of the family narrative under slavery. In the McKoys' narrative, it is the return to, not the rupture of, the family that prevails; further, the McKoys' status as a "freak of nature" authorizes the twins' display as a grand spectacle which undermines and dissolves established social frameworks and power structures. Their birth, for example, is narrated in quasi-messianic terms, a sort of second nativity scene, that rendered the sisters highly marketable, restoring value to the devalued black female body in pre-Civil War America. The irreplaceable body of the sisters, appearing as it did in a context contingent upon the standardization of the body (both within the slavery system and within the capitalist structure), provided for the twins an extraordinary measure of autonomy and self-determination.

This emphasis on autonomy and self-determination in the McKoys' narratives reiterates long-established principles, as was discussed in the previous chapter, regarding the simultaneously joyous and menacing uncontrollability of extraordinary bodies. Significantly, Stevenson's novella also places such questions of liberty at the heart of the story. In Jekyll's narrative of his first experiments with the strange elixir, he writes, "[I]t but shook the doors of the prisonhouse of my disposition; and like the captives of Philippi, that which stood within ran

forth" (55-56). In this framework, then, respectable identity functions as a punitive force, denying, deforming, and delimiting the self (or selves) that reside within. It is important to note, however, that, unlike the extraordinary bodies of nineteenth century "monsters," for Jekyll, such liberty must be exercised only covertly, under the protection of the body of a foreign Other who would bear the scourge of Jekyll's transgressions while preserving his social mask:

> Men have before hired bravos to transact their crimes, while their own person and reputation sat under shelter. I was the first ever that did so for his pleasures. I was the first that could plod in the public eye with a load of genial respectability, and in a moment, like a schoolboy, strip off these lendings and spring headlong into a sea of liberty. But for me, in my impenetrable mantle, the safety was complete. Think of it—I did not even exist! (Ibid.)

Jekyll's delight in his new-found capacity to disappear at will, to temporarily "not exist," parallels both the McKoys' and the Hiltons' destabilization of identity in the fluid shifting in their autobiographies between the first person singular and plural: at will, the speaking voice of one sister gives way to that of her twin, while in the next moment, both voices fall silent and a new, composite self, combining the voices of both sisters, comes to the fore. Like Jekyll and his alter ego, Hyde, the Hilton and McKoy twins exemplified a plasticity of identity, a plurality of selves emerging and retreating at will, that served to institute and authorize new modes of being-in-the-world and enabling, in their multiplicity, a seemingly unprecedented experience of self(ves)-determination and freedom.

Thus, Stevenson's use of the prison metaphor is particularly significant in as much as it affirms prevailing orientations toward the extraordinary body in which the body's flouting of "normal" codes of embodiment enables a concomitant rejection of social norms. The transgressive body is always already a body out of bounds, the breaching of the walls of the fleshly prison house a synecdoche for the rupturing of established codes of conduct. Just as the McKoy sisters' extraordinary embodiment enabled and rationalized the dismantling of the

strictures imposed upon black female bodies in their era, so, too, does the exceptional body of Hyde authorize a new positionality in which the standards of moral and social respectability to which the upright Dr. Jekyll must adhere no longer apply. Moreover, Stevenson's metaphor of imprisonment troubles long-standing paradigms which take the flesh as an index of the subject's internal condition—the barometer of the quality of his/her soul, spirit, and intellect. Like the bodies of conjoined twins, which unsettle foundational premises regarding the singularity and integrity of the body, Jekyll's body simultaneously conceals *and* bodies forth that which is internal. If the body is a prison house containing a secreted but omnipresent difference within the physical frame, then there is always the possibility for the escape—or the freeing—of this ineradicable other. Significantly, Jekyll finds safety in the original lack of corporeal identity between himself and Hyde, Hyde's dwarfish and bestial frame belying his own intrinsic corruption while simultaneously distancing him from the graceful and earnest bearing of the good doctor. These markers of physical difference, like the singular embodiments of conjoined twins, enable and authorize the transgression of the boundaries to which the normate, in Garland-Thomson's phrase, must submit, but it is precisely this transgressive aberrance which renders extraordinary embodiments so dangerous. The freeing of the outlaw from his prison house signifies not only a joyous liberation but also the sweeping away of constraints, the dissolution of the moderating influences which the bonds of community, the concern for social status, and the fear of the law impose upon the subject to contain and control him. The absence of such restraining forces, like the absence of the singular and bounded body, gives rise to the possibility for a monstrous excess which threatens not only the integrity of the individual but also the community into which he comes and which depends for its survival upon the incorporation and cooperation of well-modulated, normative selves.

From Liberty to Licentiousness: Unleashing the Forces of Degeneration in a Decadent Age

Parallels between the representation and autobiographical writing of conjoined twins and fin-de-siècle Gothic romances like Stevenson's are instructive in underscoring prevailing questions, concerns, and desires at the turn of the century concerning the nature and quality of individual consciousness, as well as of the integrity and the health of the embodied self. The increasing popularity of Freudian theories of the unconscious combined with growing fears of rampant physical and moral degeneration, rendering the British body increasingly unstable, unpredictable, and unknowable. Thus, representations of extraordinary bodies, whether in the writings on and by real-life conjoined twins or in the nightmarish depictions of sinister second selves like Hyde, reflect the problematization and containment of inherent social anxieties, with novels in particular serving as a form of cultural diagnostic, defining and domesticating social ills through the familiar discourse of narrative. John Glendenning's analysis of Max Nordau's work on degeneration is significant here. Glendenning describes Nordau as a

> cultural physician: he systematically disciplines the tangled phenomena of degeneration in terms of "symptoms", "diagnosis", "etiology", "prognosis", and "therapeutics." Most of [*Degeneration*] consists of case histories examining the degeneracy evidenced in the works of various debased authors, artists, composers, and in the enthusiasm of their misguided followers. (23)

Nordau's repudiation of the work of most of the great writers, artists, and thinkers of the late nineteenth century provides powerful insight into the function of cultural artifacts to represent and discharge the myriad anxieties of a global empire wrestling with the consequences of conquest, competition, expansion, and rapid socioeconomic change. The characterization of Nordau in medico-scientific terms attests to the extent of the medicalization of Victorian social, political, and aesthetic paradigms. Prevailing fears of collective degeneration position the era as

a whole as diseased, infectious, and dying, its productions bearing the stigmata of illness to be detected, diagnosed, and eradicated by the elite few thus far untainted by the forces of degeneration. Within this context, the heady pleasures and intoxicating optimism of the late Victorian era, in which British colonial domination and economic superiority seemed unquestionable and enduring, lapsed into a cultural malaise, a nausea borne of the recognition of the consequences of liberty, the ramifications of supremacy.

In a telling image near the conclusion of *Jekyll and Hyde*, Utterson and Poole catch an image of themselves and the room in which Jekyll's dead body lies multiplied infinitely in the full-length mirror:

> [T]he searchers came to the cheval-glass, into whose depths they looked with an involuntary horror. But it was so turned as to show them nothing but the rosy glow playing on the roof, the fire sparkling in a hundred repetitions along the glazed front of the presses, and their own pale and fearful countenances stooping to look in. "This glass has seen some strange things, sir," whispered Poole. "And surely none stranger than itself," echoed the lawyer. (42)

The multiplied selves projected in Jekyll's mirror literalize what fin-de-siècle Britons were growing increasingly aware of: that a definable, predictable, and stable self was an Enlightenment fiction, an ideal rather than a reality. It is significant, then, that the body of the suicidal Jekyll and the images of both the respected attorney and the humble servant should find themselves infinitely reproduced in this space of disequilibrium: not only do the trio exemplify a subversive admixture of class and creed—the servant, the gentleman lawyer, and the erstwhile healer; the upright citizens and the immoral outlaw—which shatter the demarcations of status and propriety but the replication of the images echoes the multitudinous nature of each individual self, ultimately rendering the presumably discrete body of each unfamiliar, out of reach, and out of bounds. Such a destabilization of identity had previously been thought primarily to plague

only women and the lower classes, who, by their nature, were subject to a capriciousness that rendered them particularly vulnerable to disassociative states, from hysteria to epilepsy to double consciousness. Anne Williams notes that "the male…experiences his psychological boundaries as fixed and distinct, while the female's feel more permeable, indeterminate, and problematic" (100). The scene in Jekyll's lab, however, enables no comforting distance between either the middle and upper classes and the vulnerable classes or between genders, between upright men like Utterson and those whose identity could never be fixed, whose conscious, rational minds could never fully be wrested into the control of the will.[25]

Stevenson notes that the room is adorned with all of the trappings of upper middle class domesticity, and even that the table by which Jekyll's body lies has been set as if for afternoon tea:

> There lay the cabinet before their eyes in the quiet lamplight, a good fire glowing and chattering on the hearth, the kettle singing its thin strain, a drawer or two open, papers neatly set forth on the business table, and nearer the fire, the things laid out for tea; the quietest room, you would have said, and, but for the glazed presses full of chemicals, the most commonplace that night in London. (41)

Stevenson's care in locating this horrifying scene among the accoutrements of middle-class British gentility, down to the business correspondence which might be found in any bourgeois household, is significant here in dismantling any protective barrier of class, gender, or race from the participants of the scene and from the bourgeois reader. The encompassing of the living men and the dead man/men, along with the domestic wares of consumer culture, within the endlessly multiplied images of the cheval glass extends the threat of such a dangerous dissolution of

[25] Indeed, the porosities of boundaries between selves in this novel inflect not only social and economic demarcations but also, as will be seen, the frontiers of gender. Poole describes Jekyll/Hyde as being cloistered in his laboratory (not unlike the confinement of "hysterical" women), where he "weeps like a woman or a lost soul" (40). Likewise, the eminently respectable and self-controlled Utterson finds himself feminized and out of sorts, struggling to master his nerves and scarcely retaining control of his body as he prepares to enter by force Jekyll's laboratory, startling nearly to the point of falling at sudden sounds, suggesting a corporeality exceeding rational volition and eluding the command of rational consciousness.

boundaries across all social classes. The finite and insular self is revealed in this image, and in the text as a whole, to be a fiction, echoing the at once disturbing and intriguing fascination with conjoined twins like the McKoys and the Hiltons that is at the same time also a fascination with and fear of the reader/spectator's own multiplicity of selves. Moreover, in the promiscuity of the image, the containment within the frame of the glass incompatible persons—the servant and the professional, the moral and the immoral—the boundaries of Victorian stratification are breached and the classificatory systems by which the world is defined, ordered, and regimented collapse. The cheval glass thus functions as a microcosm of the profligate metropolis in which the commingling of disparate groups both reflects and intensifies the self's internal chaos, galvanizing the disintegration of the insular self as influences without and influences within abrade the always already porous boundaries holding the individual self together, boundaries which, whether in the shocks of the clamoring city or in the blows of the multiplicitous psyche are continuously in danger of disintegrating completely.

Thus, the muddled, murky, and multifarious nature of identity, as exemplified both by the fame enjoyed by conjoined twins and by Stevenson's iconic character, Mr. Hyde, encompasses another important element within late nineteenth century Victorian culture: the nature of the self in the crowd. Linda Dryden's description of iconographies of the metropolis is instructive:

> The metropolis is presented here as a place of change and transformation, where social deprivation and overcrowded living conditions contributed significantly to literary representations. The city is seen as a schismatic space that contains extremes of wealth and poverty, and where the poor are exploited by the rich, who are in turn deeply concerned by the anonymous and threatening nature of the metropolitan experience. Perceptions of the "beast within" and Gustave Le Bon's primal "mob" contributed to the feeling that the city was literally "out of control". (16)

Similar to the conjoined twin whose multiplicitous identity brings with it a requisite compulsion to cede control, voluntarily or otherwise, to the other within, the experience of the individual self in the crowded metropolis is of an ineradicable connection—and vulnerability—to the unpredictable other. The beast within, therefore, is manifold, signifying both the menacing stranger within the confines of one's city walls, as well as the enigmatic force within oneself that such proximity to the Other threatens to unleash.[26] A 1914 edition of *The London Times* cites the eminent theorist of human "suggestibility," Dr. Boris Sidis: "Society by its very nature tends to run riot in mobs and epidemics. For the gregarious, the sub-personal, uncritical social self, the mob self, and the suggestible, sub-conscious self are identical" (qtd. in *The London Times*, June 5, 1914). This equating of the self in the crowd with the subconscious and primal drives of the id is echoed in Stevenson's situating of the bestial primitivism of Hyde alongside the moral respectability of Jekyll:

> I sat in the sun on a bench; the animal within me licking the chops of memory; the spiritual side a little drowsed, promising subsequent penitence, but not yet moved to begin….I began to be aware of a change in the temper of my thoughts, a greater boldness, a contempt of danger, a solution of the bonds of obligation. I looked down….I was once more Mr. Hyde….I have more than once observed that in my second character, my faculties seemed sharpened to a point and my spirits more tensely elastic; thus it came about that where Jekyll would have succumbed, Hyde rose to the importance of the moment. (62-63)

Hyde's heightened faculties, his vitality, and his optimized physicality reflect what LeBon had described as a defining characteristic of the crowd. For LeBon, the crowd, galvanized as it is by unconscious forces, assumes in its relinquishing of rational, conscious processes a capacity for physical dominance and domination that is akin to the powers of animals. The individual in the crowd, in effect, descends the evolutionary scale and returns to a primitive, bestial state in which

[26] As will be discussed below, the co-occurrence of two selves within one body threatens in particular the integrity of the Victorian family, destabilizing social, marital, and sexual norms even as it opens up avenues of sexual exploration unavailable to "respectable" Victorians.

survival hinges upon instinctive cunning and violent force. Thus, the instinct to both survive and to dominate which characterizes the crowd is formidably corporeal, manifesting through the flesh and by virtue of the flesh the will to live and to (over)power. The multiplicity of bodies, the excessive fleshliness, of crowds lulls the conscious and rational mind even as it awakens the physical senses. The physical pleasures of this sensation of loss of rational control and constraint, pleasures which lead the profoundly sensual Hyde to "lick the chops of memory" just before seizing control of Jekyll's body, authorize and instigate the throwing off of the bonds of Victorian respectability, giving license to a glorification of the flesh through the anonymity of that flesh: the crowd enables the individual within it to for a moment become a purely, hedonistically physical self with neither a singular identity, nor the moral, social, and physical compulsions which attend such an identity. The individual in a crowd is, for LeBon, a cell within an organism, driven by unconscious forces and accountable to and cognizant of nothing else beside.

The parallels between LeBon's descriptions of the "group mind," that is, the substitution of a collective for a singular identity, which he defines as characteristic of the formation of a crowd, and of contemporary representations of conjoined twins are clear. Accounts of the lives of conjoined twins are replete with references to the spirit of both submission and instinctive accord with the "second self" upon which harmony depends. In this formulation, it is not merely that conjoined twins negotiate with one another to reach conscious decisions on matters of day-to-day living but that the inherent sympathies of their combined bodies enable them frequently to behave without conscious thought or explicit consent as if they in fact were possessed of one mind and one body only. Such a singular mind in a "double" body suggests that conjoined twins are exceptionally formidable, enjoying the heightened faculties and magnified vitality of two-in-

one which also characterizes Hyde. Moreover, the alacrity and impunity with which Hyde assumes control of Jekyll echoes both LeBon's formulation of the individual in the crowd as well as popular descriptions of the unanimity between conjoined twins: if the individual self is, in reality, a multitude of selves (i.e. an individual within an internal "crowd"), then it is the composite self which is, ultimately, the most powerful, ascending the throne of reason and of volition at will and supplanting the weaker forces of rational consciousness with the superior, if more primitive, strength of brute physicality. The individual in the crowd, whether external or "internal," therefore, overturns Enlightenment hierarchies privileging mind over matter for it is here that excessive corporeality of "double-monsters," crowds, and the atavistic body of Hyde himself not only shapes but determines and *dominates* the conscious mind. The Enlightenment's life of the mind is vanquished by the life of the body(ies).

In addition to representing prevailing anxieties concerning the dissolution or degeneration of the rational self in the presence of the primitive other, this scene provides important clues to another central concern in the Victorian era: the manifestation of the presence, and the irruption, of the submerged self through corporeal signs, as well as the "diagnosing" of the second self through a semiotic reading of its physical body. Hyde is described again and again in terms of the grotesque; he is figured as a shrunken, atavistic homunculus whose physical body is in and of itself extremely disturbing. Significantly, however, it is the observer's inability to precisely define the body of Hyde that is most disquieting. Time and again, Hyde is noted as having an "air of deformity" though the nature of the defect is never satisfactorily quantified or understood.

An important indication of the source of Hyde's menace appears early in the novel, in a perplexing scene in which the man tramples a young girl on the street. This is Hyde's first appearance in the novel and here he is described by witnesses as "a juggernaut" which crushes

the child without hesitation, compunction, or apology. The key to this scene lies in its enigmatic nature. Stevenson is elusive in his descriptions, painting a hazy and troubling image of the collision of the child and Hyde. It is difficult to envision a solitary man, let alone one so frequently described as "dwarfish," physically trampling a child to the point of causing her grievous bodily injury. Enfield's description the collision is almost as if the child were swept up in and crushed by a massive tide or a great stampede, presaging the novella's concern with the implications of the plurality of selves and foreshadowing the infinite reflections in the cheval glass at the novella's end: "for the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut" (7). His description seems virtually impossible in even the most violent collision of two individual bodies. Thus, the description of the "juggernaut" holds the key, insofar as a juggernaut is an irresistible and crushing force. A juggernaut resists encapsulation within a discrete and singular body. As an irresistible force, it is massive but bodiless. A juggernaut may also take human form, in an irresistible impulse shared among a mass of people, such as Le Bon's primal mob. The capacity of Hyde's physical body to trample down this child in such a troublingly enigmatic way exemplifies its extraordinary nature; in its strength and force, it brings with it the power of a multitude, the energy of a massive force that far exceeds the corporeal shell that would seem to contain it. The significance of the scene is telling in as much as the pervasive inability to describe Hyde or to identify the disturbing element in his physiognomy does not negate the capacity of that physical self to manifest its true, internal nature. On-lookers may recoil at the sight of Hyde, but their failures to "diagnose" his deformity do not prevent the irruption of this inner defect, rising up to unleash its violence against the helpless child.

Indeed, such diagnostic failure is at the root of the threat posed by Hyde. As will be shown in this and subsequent chapters, the rise of the modern professional sciences in the Victorian era ensured the ascendance of the diagnostic paradigm through which latent and/or potential threats in the individual subject could be detected, defined, and addressed through the appropriate reading of corporeal signs. It is for this reason, for example, that extraordinary bodies, such as the bodies of conjoined twins, received as much, if not more, attention from scientists and physicians than from the lay public. It is also no coincidence that Lanyon, himself a physician, should be the first and only person to witness Hyde's transformation into Jekyll. Significantly, the sight is one so troubling to the doctor that it leads rapidly to his death. Hyde's deformity is beyond the scope of medical knowledge; it defies both the language and the capacity of the diagnostic paradigm. The result is a helpless and appalling silence in the presence of which the vitality of the threat itself flourishes. In an era in which empirical science in general and interventionist medicine in particular was increasingly lauded as the hope and promise of human progress, Lanyon's death signifies the limits of positivist rationalism, the frontiers beyond which only the monstrous and the mad may go and survive.

Thus, in Hyde's first appearance in the novel, he embodies in himself the massive force that exceeds the boundaries of singular corporeal identity, like the bodies of conjoined twins which simultaneously fascinated and terrified Victorians. From this point on, Hyde will continue to manifest as the irresistible force within, growing in strength with his every excursion in the external world. Significantly, like the tea table at Jekyll's death scene and the mirror which reflects with infinite repetition the images of the esteemed attorney, the working class servant, and the broken body of the once-respected physician, the juggernaut scene suggests the all-encompassing nature of this irresistible force, the consuming drive that recognizes no boundaries

of class, vocation, or social position. The gentry's comfortable distancing from women and the poor, which had been predicated upon a premise of immunity from their moral and psychological vulnerabilities are undermined in Hyde, the juggernaut, which, like a tidal wave, brings into itself all that stands in its way, without discrimination or mercy.

That Hyde should manifest in the body of the beloved physician, Jekyll, is, of course, the novel's most significant attempt to revise classist assumptions regarding the invulnerability of the affluent to the moral, psychological, and physical depredations of women and the poor. It is telling, then, that with each effort at experimentation, at each instance in which Jekyll attempts to elicit Hyde, Jekyll grows increasingly certain that the fundamental nature of all human beings is multiple rather than singular. Jekyll describes his experience with his alter ego:

> Though so profound a double-dealer, I was in no sense a hypocrite; both sides of me were in dead earnest; I was no more myself when I laid aside restraint and plunged in shame, than when I laboured, in the eye of day, at the furtherance of knowledge or the relief of sorrow and suffering. And it chanced that the direction of my scientific studies…reacted and shed a strong light on this consciousness of the perennial war among my members. With every day, and from both sides of my intelligence, the moral and the intellectual, I thus drew steadily nearer to that truth…that man is not truly one, but truly two….and I hazard the guess that man will ultimately be known for a mere polity of multifarious, incongruous, and independent denizens. (52-53)

This is a discovery that Jekyll at first embraces with joy and a kind of savage pride, seeing in the free play of his dual nature the unprecedented liberty to indulge in the free reign of his desires while simultaneously preserving the social mask that would deny them. Furthermore, Jekyll describes this as process through which he "learned to recognise the thorough and primitive duality of man" (Ibid.), which he describes in terms of conjoined twins: "It was the curse of mankind that these incongruous faggots were thus bound together—that in the agonised womb of consciousness, these polar twins should be continuously struggling. How, then were they dissociated?" (Ibid.) At the time of *Jekyll*'s publication in 1886, physicians across Europe were

concentrating on the nature of hysteria and the influence of what would come to be known as subconscious drives upon it. Most notably, a young Freud was working in Paris with the preeminent expert on hypnosis, the neurologist Jean Charcot, laying the groundwork for what Freud would later define as the tripartite theory of human consciousness.

Jekyll's appearance, then, coincided with an important moment in the social understanding and representation of human psychology, as consciousness began to be increasingly defined as amorphous and polyvalent. It was within this context that reports of "double consciousness" across Europe became ubiquitous, as individuals of all walks of life began to report incidents of missing time and secondary identities. Indeed, Jekyll's narrative suggests an initial joy in the recognition of this second self:

> I was conscious of no repugnance, rather of a leap of welcome. This, too, was myself. It seemed natural and human. In my eyes, it bore a livelier image of the spirit, it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine. (55)

Of greatest significance here are the efforts of physicians, psychologists, scientists, attorneys, and the lay public to "read" indications of a secondary self on the physical body. Though the depravity of Hyde's character remained inexplicable to the observer, efforts to locate his (moral and physical) "deformity" through corporeal signs continued, with characters as diverse as the rational Utterson, the dreamy-eyed chambermaid, and the outraged upper class mothers defending the injured child all reporting a revulsion in Hyde's physical presence that was also an attraction, insofar as the body, for them, represents a troubling mystery to be resolved and, by extension, contained. Mighall argues that, at the end of the nineteenth century, "physiology became the index to the ancestral or racial past, the place to locate anachronistic vestiges of a long-buried antiquity" (qtd. in Dryden 77). Attempts to locate and classify Hyde's

deformity, then, would situate him within racial, ethnic, and/or class-based taxonomies that would domesticate this troubling figure and dismantle his disruptive powers.

Despite the observers' inability to, at last, tame Hyde's atavistic body through a form of collective diagnosis of its physical signs, Hyde's body reveals itself as the narrative unfolds to be increasingly uncontainable, affirming the fatal influence it would have on Dr. Lanyon and thus symbolizing the "death" of medical wisdom and potency in the presence of the enigmatic monster. Jekyll's initial hubristic delight in his belief that the second self would serve for him as an alternate embodiment that he could put on and take off at will as readily as any other adornment, as easily as any other social mask, soon gives way to terror in the intransigence of Hyde. Indeed, Jekyll's suicide is precipitated by the increasing awareness of his powerlessness to control Hyde, his acknowledgement that soon he, Jekyll, not Hyde, would be the second self. Greenslade situates Hyde's indeterminate and threatening presence within the context of fin de siècle paradigms of the secret sharer:

> The secret sharer was emblematically figured for post-Darwinian audiences as the beast in man. Fear of the hidden presence of a 'monstrous' and disruptive energy was experienced and articulated as the surrendering to that influence. Age-old hierarchies, which had assumed unquestioned relations of authority and subordination—civilized and brutish, higher and lower, mind and body, reason and instinct—were under pressure as never before. The fear of atavism, of regression to a lower state, offered the perfect medium for the expression of these worrying questions. (qtd. in Dryden 9)

This turn of events is significant insofar as it parallels with what many critics and social theorists have identified as an obsession at the turn of the century with the physical body and, in particular, with the search for corporeal signs of inward disease and disorder. From the pseudo-sciences of phrenology and craniology to the comparative anatomists and early neurobiologists, positivist science provided the rationale for and instruments and methodologies through which

the cultural fixation on the body and its signs could be enacted. Bernheimer argues that this sense of "instability brought out in the degenerationists an urge to master the social and political anxieties it generated through objective scientific classification and preventative methods of social hygiene" (141). Therefore, the collective efforts to detect and define Hyde's deformity, efforts in which, significantly, persons of all classes and creeds engage at one time or another in the text, reflect not merely morbid curiosity but also and perhaps most importantly an interventionist paradigm informed by the rise of modern professional medicine. Within this framework, diagnosis and intercession, particularly by recognized experts into whose hands such responsibilities were increasingly placed,[27] was a collective obligation informed less by concerns for the individual's welfare than by the desire to protect, preserve, and/or restore the health of the social body.

As Stevenson's novel illustrates, the interrogation of the nature of human identity was a matter of obsessive cultural concern. Furthermore, this was an interrogation that took place, preeminently, on the surfaces of the human body. The intertwining of the psychological, moral, and somatic, once again, is evidenced in Jekyll's narrative of his experience with the strange elixir:

> I not only recognised my natural body from the mere aura and effulgence of certain of the powers that made up my spirit, but managed to compound a drug by which these powers should be dethroned from their supremacy, and a second form and countenance substituted, none the less natural to me because they were the expression, and bore the stamp of lower elements in my soul. (53-54)

[27] This is not to suggest that the lay public washed their hands of such obligations. As can be seen, persons from all walks of life were invested in "diagnosing" Hyde and redressing his crimes. As the sciences, and medicine in particular, became increasingly professionalized in this era, however, the emergence of the expert authority opened a rift between public and professional knowledge, a gap which the public at large was increasingly obligated to acknowledge and to which it was required to defer. Thus, it is the professional men, such as Lanyon and Utterson, representing the related fields of medicine and law, respectively, into whose hands the burden is placed to understand and deal with Hyde. The lay public, represented by Poole and his fellow servants, may detect certain bodily signs that might aid in this diagnostic process, but only to report them to learned experts, who alone possess the power to interpret and act upon such signs.

That Hyde's presence would manifest itself with increasing clarity and frequency, despite Jekyll's best efforts to contain him, exemplifies what was taken as rote at the fin de siècle: that inner deformations would reveal themselves at last, if not in the body of the subject, then certainly in the bodies and behaviors of his children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren.

As a result of prevailing concerns over any potential link between disease and heredity, efforts to locate the signs of an inward "deformity," whether this deformity should manifest in criminality, insanity, addiction, promiscuity, or another "disease," would come to be linked strongly in this era both with sexuality and with controlled reproduction. In a 1907 edition of *The Journal of Mental Science,* Dr. E. Stansfield is quoted as follows:

> There is a floating mass of degeneracy in the population which is constantly augmented by the victims of social vice and its satellites, syphilis and drink, and from this mass we derive the bulk of our asylum population, fill our prisons, and supply our "unemployable" and that this is increasing at a faster rate than the normal population is, I think, indicated by the statistics of the Lunacy Commission….I believe that one important factor in the disproportionate increase is the lowering birthrate of practically all classes except these degenerates. (qtd. in "Asylum Report" 203)

Stansfield seems to follow his description of this "floating (and fertile) mass of degeneracy" with a recommendation for the selective sterilization of this undesirable population. In Stevenson's novel, such presumptions of the greater fertility of so-called "degenerate" populations can be seen in the superior vitality of Hyde. Despite his dwarfish and atavistic appearance, Hyde is physically stronger than his genteel counterpart and his strength grows exponentially with every moment of freedom. Indeed, a few short months of "life" are sufficient to strengthen Hyde to the point that he is able to overtake Jekyll at will and, ultimately, to force Jekyll's hand in suicide to prevent Hyde for assuming complete and continuous control of Jekyll's body.

Hyde's appalling and seemingly boundless vitality, outpacing as it does the vital force of the "respectable" Dr. Jekyll, illustrates the widespread fear discussed by Dr. Stansfield above over the reproductive capacities of "undesirables" and, especially, the implications of this for the future health and integrity of the race. As a result, the large-scale measures encouraging controlled reproduction that were implemented in this era as a result of such fears parallel and in many respects are authorized and advanced by efforts to quantify and contain the extraordinarily embodied. Attempts to fix the identity of conjoined twins, to define the boundaries between the self and the other, and to detect and domesticate any "Others" within, extend the larger social project which would alleviate the widespread anxiety that individual identity was inherently unstable, that the self was unfixed and porous, amenable to corruption both from without (i.e. the primal mob and/or the cultural other) and from within (i.e. the forces of heredity). Within this framework, the fame of conjoined twins like Chang and Eng, Millie-Christine, and the Hilton sisters can be readily understood, as these transgressive bodies came to signify vexed understandings of human identity at all social levels, from the lower class laborer whose body and mind have been corroded by the noxious urban environment in which he lives, to the bourgeois gentleman frightened into a second identity by the sound of a train whistle and the unremitting stresses of business life, to the learned man of science, tempted by hubristic faith in his own powers of self-control to foolishly unleash the beast within. Indeed, it is Jekyll's inherent vulnerability to this impish figure that most terrorizes Utterson, whose own imagination Hyde has so intractably "enslaved." Utterson's fears for his friend are described in evocative terms:

> [H]e would see a room in a rich house, where his friend lay asleep, dreaming and smiling at his dreams; and then the door of that room would be opened, the curtains of the bed plucked apart, the sleeper recalled, and lo! there would stand

> by his side a figure to whom power was given, and even at that dead hour, he must rise to do its bidding. (13)

The medical examinations to which conjoined twins were subjected in this era play an important function here. In an era increasingly fixated upon pathology and, in particular, upon the inscription of inner physical, psychological, and moral deformities on the surface of the body, the medical examination of conjoined twins served a vital role in attempts to define the boundaries of the body. In their memoir, the Hilton twins write of the ubiquitous presence of the physician in their lives: " 'Siamese twins'… 'cut apart'… 'doctor' are the first words we seemed to remember. They stood for fear and created our longing [to] remain joined by our birth-bond of flesh and bone" (qtd. in Frost 34) Medical records reveal that conjoined twins were subjected to a battery of tests in order to determine, first, whether the subject could be defined as a single person or as multiple persons, and, second, to ascertain (and, more importantly, to fix) the borders between individuals, to draw lines of "ownership" across the frontiers of the twins' bodies. In this effort, the bodies of twins would be palpated to determine sensation. Twins would be made to ingest various substances and the output of their bladder and bowels compared. Most significantly, they would be subjected to intrusive physical examinations, with the medical gaze serving to define, ascribe, and discursively stabilize bodily structures, determining the proprietary rights of the flesh through a required submission to expert authority. Dr. William Pancoast's case history of the McKoy twins, which he wrote for the purposes of "the description and diagnosis of special forms of double monsters" (qtd in Frost 99) is particularly instructive here. In his summary, Pancoast notes the twins' reluctance to submit to a nude photograph, which showcased the location of their physical connection as well as the genital abscess for which the doctor was originally summoned:

> After great persuasion and the kind assistance of Dr. F.F. Maury…the accompanying photograph of them was taken. They clung to their raiment closely, as may be seen, and it was only by earnest entreaty that they were willing to compromise by retaining the drapery as photographed. (Ibid.)

This scene is followed quickly by a chilling description of an even more intrusive physical examination of the twins' bodies, which suggests the underlying function of the nude photograph and the doctor's emphasis on a visual and narrative record of the twins' sex organs. Pancoast describes his examination of the twins in clinical terms: "I passed a female catheter into each urethra, and could distinctly recognize a partition between the two bladders. I passed then two metallic catheters, one into each bladder; they did not touch each other" (Ibid., 103).

Just as lower, middle, and upper class Londoners sought to diagnose Hyde's mysterious deformity, medical surveillance of and intervention on the extraordinary body constitutes, foremost, an effort to domesticate the body, to bring it within acceptable boundaries. Thus, the diagnosis-prognosis-treatment paradigm uses pathology as a means of both classification and control, rendering extraordinary bodies natural and predictable through cooptation into the biomedical regime. Such intervention is necessary because extraordinary bodies are, by their nature, dangerous, their transgression of traditional taxonomies and required embodied practices presaging the dismantling of the social, cultural, and familial structures into which they come. Kunst describes the precarious position of the monstrous in the modern era:

> On the one hand, the monstrous is becoming instrumental and invisible (in the sense that it becomes an object in a laboratory): a functional object of science. On the other hand, the monstrous is restaged on the political stage: due to its tricky and pretentious nature, it is endangering a political order. As a result, all future explanations of its nature will lead to attempted domestication. (213)

Frost's analysis of the life-writing surrounding the Hilton and McKoy twins, for example, hints at the role that the threat of transgressive sexualities plays in the understanding of and reaction to the twins' embodiments. She cites a telling example from the Hiltons' autobiography

of the sisters' shared pleasure when one twin holds the hand of her suitor: their physical connection enables her twin to excite in the sensation of the touch of her sister's paramour. Such a shared bond would later be fictionalized in a kiss shared between Violet and her on-screen fiancé in Tod Browning's *Freaks*. Frost argues that

> it is this shared sense of sexual intimacy that Allison Pingree argues shows us how the doubling of the twins' sexuality and female force were part of a larger conversation of the newly independent and resourceful "New Woman" and all that she promised—and threatened. (31)

This concern is reiterated in earlier writings by both medical and ecclesiastical authorities concerning the McKoy twins' fitness for marriage and motherhood. Following a thorough physical examination, it is concluded that there are in fact no physiological barriers to marriage and childbirth, but that the "moral" barriers are large and, presumably, insurmountable (Frost 24).

Attempts to define and contain the excessive embodiment of conjoined twins may therefore be understood as an attempt to preserve the integrity of the family, a preeminent concern in the Victorian era, in which rapidly shifting social, scientific, and economic paradigms threatened to undermine the stability of the Victorian home, casting into question established paradigms of male/female relationships and "appropriate" sexual behaviors. Hetero-normative networks which would insist upon and naturalize sexual exclusivity between one "male" and one "female" body cannot accommodate sexuality in bodies that defy quantification, as do the bodies of conjoined twins. The debate over the nature of the twins' identity, questioning whether such twins constitute one or two selves, challenges monogamous marital structures. The twins' embodiments and, perhaps more significantly, their sense of self(ves), frustrate any attempts to reconcile traditional paradigms of the Victorian family with those extraordinarily embodied subjects whose self-concept(s) structure(s) around an ideal of identity that is at once singular,

duplex, and tripartite. Thus, the impossibility of enumerating extraordinary bodies such as these places marital/sexual relations likewise on a shifting frontier between the sanctioned and holy and the prohibited and unsanctified. A marriage to one sister, in her singular state, affirms and protects the boundaries of traditional practice, but such a marriage is also one that is already polygamous insofar as her body's unboundedness, the excessiveness that denies singular integrity, both invites and necessitates the inclusion of an other, a third self that makes the marital/sexual union a perversion according to traditional paradigms. Shildrick argues that

> the supposedly excessively sexuate nature of women is an implicit assumption….And even where maternity is seen as the salvation of potentially wayward women—as it was for much of the Victorian period and the twentieth century—there is no guarantee that women's social and familial recuperation is secure. Like other women, mothers, as a highly discursive category, have often represented both the best hopes and worst fears of societies faced with an intuitive sense of their own instabilities and vulnerabilities….Given their necessary reproductive access to male bodies, women represented a deadly threat in the struggle between the forces of progress and primitivism. Although a woman properly controlled and contained in a reproductive relationship in which she was otherwise passive was welcomed as the mother of race purity, it was only the most superior and continent of men who could hope to achieve such a union. (30)

It seems significant, then, that the McKoy and Hilton twins were denied both by expert authority and cultural assumption the right to marry and rear children when perhaps the nineteenth century's most famous conjoined twins, Chang and Eng Bunker, exercised such rights amid great interest and enthusiasm from the public at large. Gender roles seem to have played an instrumental function in shaping both the McKoys' and the Hiltons' marital prospects, principally due to the female's rootedness in the physical body.

Post-Enlightenment paradigms of subject-formation would situate the male as pure mind, an almost disembodied figure whose corporeality was profoundly utilitarian, enabling him to bring to fruition the mandates of his rational mind but otherwise disappearing. The male body is the compliant body, enabling the male subject to perform as he wishes without intruding itself

and, most importantly, without contaminating the pure and rational mind with the body's vulnerabilities or its desires. Frost's comments on medical experts' tendency in America to equate the bodies of black women, in particular, with the limits and boundaries of their sex organs could apply equally well to imperial England, with its long established history of "freak performance:"

> [I]t is blatant evidence of the sexual economy of slavery and the pornographic and sexual appropriation of black women's bodies that were foundational not just to slavery or the racist terrorism that followed its demise but also to institutions of popular entertainment like the freak show. (22)

Within this schema, all women, and particularly black women, are the profoundly and intransigently embodied. In their capacity to menstruate, to give birth, and to nurture children with their physical bodies, theirs is a subject-self inextricably rooted in the flesh. Therefore, the inability to demarcate the boundary-lines of the flesh of female conjoined twins magnifies their excessive/transgressive identity, making marriage/sexuality within the traditional frameworks an impossibility. If males are pure mind, then the extraordinary bodies of male conjoined twins have (relatively) little impact on a male subject-self presumed to be constituted fundamentally of the disembodied reason, the rational mind. Shildrick argues that "the masculine has been associated with the limit, the female with the limitless, where the latter implies a failure of the proper, an unaccountability beyond the grasp of instrumental consciousness" (31).

The troubling questions regarding gender roles, marital relationships, and "appropriate" sexuality raised by conjoined twins find themselves reflected in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* with the dangers posed by Jekyll's duplicate self rooted fundamentally in its transgression of hetero-normative behaviors. The instability of Jekyll's character leads to a marked feminization not only of the good doctor, but, as was previously noted, of his respected associates as well, who find

themselves swooning and near hysterics in the face of the psychological disturbances he engenders. Jekyll himself describes the laboratory in which he concocted his potion as the site of a suffering so intense that it is "unmanning." The unmanning of Jekyll is reiterated by the servant, Poole, who tells Utterson of the hours Jekyll spends "Weeping like a woman or a lost soul" (40). Jekyll's feminization in the face of his horror extends itself to the friends who reach out to care for him. In reaching the laboratory where Jekyll has cloistered himself in the face of his crisis, Utterson temporarily loses control of his physical faculties, as the body (long equated with the female) momentarily rebels against the supposed sovereignty of the rational (male) will: "Mr. Utterson's nerves, at this unlooked-for termination, gave a jerk that nearly threw him from his balance" (36).

Even more important, perhaps, are the limits of authorized sexual behavior that Jekyll transgresses in the form of Hyde. Significantly, these behaviors are never explicitly characterized in the novel and Jekyll himself is even seen to minimize them: "The pleasures which I made haste to seek in my disguise were, as I said, undignified; I would scarce use a harder term. But in the hands of Edward Hyde, they soon began to turn toward the monstrous" (57)**.** This devolution from the "undignified" to the "monstrous" is crucial, insofar as it reflects latent Victorian anxieties concerning the self's unexplored and presumably uncontainable transgressive potential. Just as conjoined twins emblematized in this era the transgressing of presumptively insuperable boundaries, from the bounded integrity of the individual self to the sanctified and requisite monogamy of the marital relationship, in *Jekyll and Hyde*, the duplex character of the upright physician serves, foremost, to radically destabilize and undermine behavioral norms. Most importantly, as the text demonstrates, after the breach of such boundaries comes the flood, unleashing a torrent of excess that rapidly transforms the undignified into the monstrous.

It is for this reason that Hyde quickly comes to represent the uncontainable force, which appears with little warning and, ultimately, completely without Jekyll's consent or control: "I began to spy a danger that…the balance of my nature might be permanently overthrown, the power of voluntary change be forfeited, and the character of Edward Hyde become irrevocably mine" (59). That Jekyll describes his initial encounters with this alter ego in the language of self-discovery is no coincidence, however, for this uncontainable alter ego is the self without knowledge of whom complete self-awareness is an impossibility. Jekyll asserts that in meeting Hyde, "*I knew myself*, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil" (54).

Thus, the multitudinous nature of the self that conjoined twins literalize and that Stevenson's gothic romance metaphorizes is a polymorphic self that is dangerously present in all individuals, as frequent references made by Jekyll's friends and associates make clear. It is significant that Stevenson's secondary characters should represent society's most esteemed figures, practitioners of valued professions, from law to medicine, insofar as these professional men, according to post-Enlightenment paradigms, would seem to be immune from the temptations and corruptions of the flesh. Stevenson consciously and consistently reiterates that such immunity is, above all, a fiction. Of the eminently respectable Utterson, Stevenson writes:

> [T]he lawyer…brooded awhile on his own past, groping in all the corners of his memory, lest by chance some Jack-in-the-Box of an old iniquity should leap to light there. His past was fairly blameless; few men could read the roles of their life with less apprehension, yet he was humbled to the dust by the many ill things he had done, and raised up again into a sober and fearful gratitude by the many he had come so near to doing yet avoided. (17)

Stevenson's text suggests that if Utterson, arguably the text's most moral character, should find himself so desperately mortified by the prospect that his transgressions be publicized, how much more salacious and appalling must be the misdeeds of the average man, for whom the bonds of

uprightness weigh less heavily. Moreover, the fact that Utterson must cast about in his memory for "iniquit[ies]" long forgotten reaffirms models of the secret sharer, of the self as unplumbed mystery. Utterson's capacity, then, to empathize and identify with Jekyll's plight mirrors the fascination with which conjoined twins were met, a fascination which, tellingly, often centered upon the realities of these twins' domestic lives, and, in particular, of conjoined twins' inevitable disruption of sexual norms related both to monogamy and to heterosexuality.

That even the most upright of Stevenson's characters should so strongly identify with Jekyll's plight implies that the concurrent fear, shame, uncertainty, and attraction of the hidden and largely unknown self are intrinsic to the human experience.[28] Such an empathic universality is reiterated throughout the novel and most tellingly in the conflicting attitudes toward social authorities. Early in the novel, Utterson's cousin, Enfield, describes a long and lonely journey through the nighttime streets of London: "At last I got into that state of mind when a man listens and listens and begins to long for the sight of a policeman" (7). This sentiment is taken up again, and, significantly, reversed, in the thoughts of Utterson: "he was conscious of that terror of the law and the law's officers that sometimes assails the most honest" (22). Such scenes affirm and extend prevailing Victorian concerns regarding the unknown self, the secret sharer and beast within that simultaneously threatens and attracts. The yearning for the protection of the law that is simultaneously with the fear of the law's proscriptions signifies the ambivalence through which normative codes of civility contend with the allure of lawlessness. Furthermore, as we will see in the next section, such alluring lawlessness is frequently imaged as an exotic other who

[28] It is this capacity to identify with the sufferer which lends to the abject other such power. As leading disability theorists, including Lennard Davis and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, have argued, the disavowal of the non-normative body derives most often from the conscious or unconscious recognition of oneself in the abject body of the other. Both the fear and the power of the extraordinary body, therefore, may be ascribed to the recognition that, unlike racial, ethnic, or gender differences, the normate is vulnerable to *becoming* the abject other and that, indeed, insofar as the body of the normate is a mortal body, the processes of disease and debility by which the normate becomes the "abnormal" are always already in progress.

serves at once to mirror the secret sharer within while also actuating its domestication, enabling a catharsis through which the inner and unknown self is materialized and expunged through the corporeal presence of the exotic stranger.

The Other End of the World: Darkest England in the Heart of London

While Hyde may be said to manifest in physical form the drives and desires secreted in the unconscious of the eminent Dr. Jekyll, it is nevertheless no coincidence that the embodied life of the physician's dark alter ego should be profoundly rooted in a geographic space that is in itself laden with significance, a rhetorically and ideologically-charged locus of all that is sinister, primitive, and sensual in the great city, a sort of collective unconscious in which the impulses and the drives of the metropolis itself lurk. Within this context, Stevenson's introduction of Hyde is particularly telling. Enfield recounts his first meeting with Hyde, stating that it occurred when he (Enfield) was "coming back from the other end of the world" (6). Enfield's description is informative on multiple levels. First, it exemplifies what authorities of this time period have identified as the "Darkest England" paradigm. In this image, England is itself configured as a sort of Siamese twin, the body of the nation divided into two seemingly incompatible but inseparable parts. The "first" England is that of respectable Victorian society. It is the idealized image of the body politic, an amalgamation of respectable, industrious citizenry dedicated to the perpetuation of an upright British civilization both at home and abroad. The reverse image and inextricable counterpart is the "second" England, the England from whence Enfield has come as from the other end of the world.

Like the British colonial territories which serve to both reflect and undermine the British colonial self-image, this second England is one which functions as a sort of synecdoche of the

British psyche, most notably the subconscious and the drives of the Id. From Whitechapel to Soho where Hyde keeps his apartment, the second England is the site of poverty, deprivation, and depravity. The seedy undercurrents of British life flow here, hidden and unacknowledged, but nevertheless a real and present danger to the righteous British imago to which it is ineradicably bound. Stevenson's text is replete with images of a multiform and amorphous city that defies qualification and quantification. This is a London in which "the buildings are so packed together…that it's hard to say where one and another begins" (6); this is a London in which

> The fog still slept on the wing above the drowned city, where the lamps glimmered like carbuncles; and through the muffle and smother of these fallen clouds, the procession of the town's life was still rolling in through the great arteries with a sound as of a mighty wind. (26)

The hidden but thriving life of the city, like the extraordinary bodies of conjoined twins and the irrepressible body of Hyde, resists containment, irrupting at unforeseen moments into consciousness and life. Indeed, it is within this context that the more oblique implications of Enfield's description come to the fore in as much as Enfield, himself a respected gentleman and cousin of the morally stalwart Utterson, is, "conjoined" with peoples and spaces ostensibly incompatible with himself and the position which he occupies within his society. That he should find himself returning "from the end of the world" affirms that he has for a time occupied this space of lawless boundlessness, venturing into the physical spaces through which the riotous forces of the unconscious play and in which elite Britons like Enfield are stripped of the trappings of civility which both define and constrain them. Furthermore, Enfield's formulation suggests that he is both a voluntary and frequent sojourner to this outer/other world, a world in which the compulsions of the material body usurp the control of the rational mind, dethroning the rational, Enlightenment subject as easily as Hyde overwhelms Jekyll.

Enfield's implication that his travels to the outer edges of the ("civilized") world of the First England not only affirms the Two Englands model, but it also further entrenches the paradigm through which duality enables, actuates, and rationalizes the dissolution of the discrete self, a dissolution exemplified so readily in late Victorian readings of the bodies of conjoined twins and further illustrated in the increasing fascination with the phenomenon of double-consciousness. Enfield's forays into the sensual "unconscious" of the city, the nothingness at the end of the world, presage the breakdown of the identity paradigms through which Imperial England defines, sustains, and perpetuates itself. Hierarchical taxonomies of race, class, and gender fall away in the primitive and undifferentiated physicality of this Darkest England, where aristocrats solicit the affections of impoverished prostitutes and bourgeois Londoners chase the dragon in drug dens populated by addicts of all races, colors, and creeds. The intoxicating and sinister amorphousness that rings the heart of the great empire is illustrated most pointedly in the image of Utterson's nightly search for a glimpse of Hyde: "he had grown accustomed to the quaint effect with which the footfalls of a single person, while he is still a great way off, suddenly spring out distinct from the vast hum and clatter of the city" (14).

Thus, the analogy of the two Englands theory to conjoined twins derives from the recognition of the symbiotic relationship between the two spheres. Stevenson's cursory acknowledgment of Enfield's apparently habitual frequenting of London's disreputable areas (he refers to them with the cryptic but casual tones of a familiar) illustrates the porous boundaries between the two worlds. Enfield, like his friend and cousin, Utterson, is a man of social standing, a young professional in an era in which the status of the professions was in ascendance, rapidly eclipsing the aristocracy that had for so long been at the apex of the social hierarchy. Hyde first appears in the novel at second-hand, as Enfield tells the story of his encounter with the man as he

(Enfield) returns to his fashionable home from the debauched and derided locales that are, presumably, his frequent haunts.

However, the symbiotic relationship of the Two Englands, their inextricable connection, is suggested not only by the apparent ease with which Enfield habituates himself to these dark realms but also by the equal proficiency through which Hyde accommodates himself to the affluent sectors of the city, penetrating the civilized spaces of the First England as easily as Enfield enters its darkness, if not more so. Enfield's story suggests that the initial encounter between Enfield and Hyde takes place not in these outer realms, but near Enfield's own neighborhood. Thus, Stevenson's introduction of Hyde, the dwarfish, fiendish, hedonistic being, takes place not in these compromised quarters of the second England, but among the lavish luxury of respectable society, among the well-kempt streets and houses that Enfield calls home.

Just as *Bleak House* establishes a corollary anxiety of an England grown beyond its capacities with a fascination and repugnance for transgressive bodies, both Enfield's and Hyde's positioning in this scene suggest similar transgressions: here, the bourgeois body of the respectable English gentleman has found itself in the filthy enclaves of Darkest England, while the deformed animalism of Hyde stalks the manicured neighborhoods of the gentry. Mary Douglas has noted that dirt is "matter out of place," but here are bodies out of place, and the discordance between the men's social and geographical positioning resonates with an imaginative construction of England as simultaneously duplicate and singular. The existence of a second England, a subterranean Britain that paradoxically undermines and upholds the first, informs a pluralistic understanding of the realm.

At the same time, however, Hyde's and Enfield's capacity to move seamlessly between the two Englands exemplifies the porosity—or even the nonexistence—of true boundaries

between them. This is significant insofar as the boundlessness which characterizes the outlaw and otherworldly spaces of Darkest England is echoed in an intrinsic amorphousness at the perimeters of the great city, an amorphousness, indeed, which may even be an extension of this nether-world itself, the spread of a contagion against which even the hygienic borders of civilized modernity provide no quarantine. Linnaean taxonomies have no power in these liminal spaces because, as was shown in the analysis of miasma theory and of the ideological symbology of infectious disease in Chapter One of this study, the fluidity of bodies breaks down systems of classification and categorization. Enfield's encounter with Hyde so early in Stevenson's novel sets the stage for a depiction of late Victorian England in which the comforting boundedness upon which imperial modernity rests collapses beneath an ambiguity of bodies, selves, and spaces, an ambiguity that enables beasts in human form to prowl the heart of the metropolis, trampling over innocent girl children and elderly aristocrats alike, while in the polluted and depraved streets of Soho, slatterns, addicts, and criminals cavort with the elite, the affluent, and the aristocratic, as law and lawlessness, quite literally, collide.

Infection in the Modern Vein: Venuses, Vamps, and Stoker's *Dracula*

If, as was shown in chapter one, the bodies of giants were appropriated into British iconographies of growth, splendor, and power, conjoined twins operated to somaticize an increasing recognition of the destabilization of social categories, particularly in the late Victorian era. As has been shown, the inability to draw the boundaries of the body, to differentiate between singular and plural selves, literalizes the implications of the two Englands theory, which renders impossible any separation of the two halves of the national body and mocks all efforts to erect an insuperable border between them. In the analysis of Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll*

and Mr. Hyde, late Victorian readings of the bodies of conjoined twins were invoked to underscore contemporary anxieties regarding the nature of the individual self. Such anxieties reflect growing questions concerning both the integrity and the decipherability of identity, questions driven in large measure by the emerging field of psychoanalysis and the growing influence of Freudian theories of the unconscious.

Thus, gothic romances like Stevenson's parallel the concerns often displaced onto the material bodies of conjoined twins regarding the inherent ambiguities of the inner self, the ambivalent awareness of an other within, of a self that is neither fully singular nor wholly knowable. As the remainder of this chapter will show, however, prevailing anxieties at the fin de siècle concerning the presence of the secret sharer within are linked in important ways with an equally potent fear of the external other, the simultaneously menacing and alluring threat from beyond the heart of empire (i.e. from Enfield's "end of the world") which no frontiers can contain. If Freudian theories of the unconscious played a particularly powerful role in destabilizing identity categories and calling into question presumptions of the rational Enlightenment subject as a stable and predictable subject position, the vexed position of the British Empire at the end of the nineteenth century served in equal measure to inflame anxieties over the integrity of the social body, over the health and longevity of the British "race." Low argues that in his *London Labour and the London Poor,* Henry Mayhew's seminal 1861 analysis of urban poverty, the author had

> already begun to enmesh social practices with physical and cultural characteristics by situating his study within the disciplinary paradigm of contemporary anthropology. In his attempts to enhance the scientific status of his work, Mayhew's comparison of London's 'wandering tribes' to the Bushmen and 'Hottentot Sonquas' reads like a catalogue of racial attributes. (13)

Low goes on to describe narratives of a pathological infectiousness deployed to marginalize the urban poor, even as they insist upon the immunity of the middle and upper classes from these terrors. Describing the work of Andrew Mearns, Low argues that Mearns "draws on the rhetoric of bodily contagion and moral contamination which sets apart the slum dwellers from the middle class "reliable explorer" and his readers" (Ibid., 14). Significantly, however, the premise of the complete separation, on the one hand, between the two Englands and the rampant physiological and moral contagiousness of "Darkest England" on the other is, in late Victorian England, not as stable as Low would seem to suggest here. Pervasive fears of degeneration, particularly degeneration related to race, powerfully inform Victorian iconographies of self and other. Among the most important aspects of this derives from prevailing theories which posited a profound link between environment and race. Such a link marks racial boundaries as porous and indeterminate, much like the unstable bodies of Millie-Christine, the Hilton twins, and Jekyll/Hyde. Indeed, Low herself notes that

> Degeneration taps into a vein of writing on environmentalism and race….Racial environmentalism details a paradigm in which external forces (such as climate) mould the racial character and physical differences of the various groups. Acclimatisation leads to racial traits over time. (Ibid.)

The destabilization of racial categories and attendant fears of degeneration are crucial concerns here. If England is an indeterminate, multiform, and amorphous social body, like the bodies of conjoined twins and the Jekyll/Hyde alter egos which mirror them in ostensibly "normative" bodies, then the body is doubly vulnerable, threatened both from within and from without. Environmental determinism in regard to race reifies the porosity of the body's boundaries, its capacity to absorb and, ultimately, be transformed by external forces. Thus, if Stevenson's text speaks to the threat of the other within, then, as will be shown in the remainder of this chapter,

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* may be seen to deploy prevailing concerns over race, heredity, environment, and moral and physiological contagion, to problematize Victorian fears of the other without.

In Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde,* Enfield's declaration that he encounters Hyde at a moment when he is "returning from somewhere at the end of the world" carries with it another important implication insofar as it situates the irruption of the unpredictable, irrational, and dangerous within a geospatial context. Presumably, Enfield's sojourn in this undefined space, this space without name, place, or time, ties with his encounter of the other within. Enfield is seasoned for Hyde's arrival by his evening spent in this "other" space; Enfield's encounter with Hyde, then, is less significant than where this encounter takes place. It is not in the back alleys of Soho or the opium dens of Whitechapel, from whence Enfield has just come. The shock, as was touched upon in the last section, is in the appearance of Hyde where he does not belong, a denizen of darkness in the fields of light.

The permeability of boundaries, the bleeding of the two Englands into one another, as has been argued, parallels the era's interest in bodies which refuse to be bounded—such as those of conjoined twins. Stevenson's emphasis here on the geographical context, his focus on place, resonates in important ways with other fin de siècle concerns, most notably with the elasticity of England's physical, social, and cultural boundaries, the ever-growing threat that the Other without can and will become the Other within. The preoccupation with the Other beyond the boundaries of the body and of the body politic imagine and configure the Other as a mobile agent, one capable of penetrating the porous defenses of the self and the state, irredeemably altering the body through the absorption of that which is foreign to it. Such concerns are manifest

in two of the era's most important figures, Bram Stoker's iconic image of horror, Count Dracula, and Saartjie (Sarah) Baartman, also known as the Hottentot Venus.

By the time *Dracula* was published in 1897, Sarah Baartman had been dead for more than 80 years, her skeleton, brain, and genitalia on display at Paris' *Musée de l'Homme* after an adult life spent on exhibition across England and Continental Europe. Before her death in 1815 at the approximate age of 25, Baartman was brought as a slave from her native South Africa to serve as an object of scientific and public curiosity due to what was defined in the era as specific physical anomalies intrinsic to African women in general and to those of Baartman's tribe in particular. Of particular importance is the fact that these presumptive "racial" traits were regarded both within the lay community and among the emerging disciplines of modern, professional science as indicative of the purported sexual voracity of persons[29] of color. Europeans regarded what they saw as the enlarged buttocks and labia of Baartman as a physical manifestation of the sexual and reproductive capacity of Khoisan[30] women.

The stigmata of a rapacious sexuality, according to the medico-social paradigms of the day, positioned Baartman as an iconic image of the gendered and racial Other, even as it reified her status as scientific and medical object. Prior to her death, Baartman endured intense pressure from medical authorities to submit her body to scientific observation, description, and display. Like the McKoy twins, Baartman ultimately succumbed to anatomists' particularly intense demands for the examination and sketching of her genitalia, which after her death would be dissected from her body and publicly exhibited. As Peter J. Bloom notes, the exhibition of Baartman's genitalia coincided with intensive scrutiny into the biological and attendant

[29] Women of color were defined as particularly sexually voracious, even more so than the ostensibly exceptionally virile black male.

[30] The Khoisan were widely known in Europe in this era as the now pejorative "Hottentot" tribe, a term derived from the Dutch for "stutterer" in reference to European attempts to understand and imitate the Khoi language.

sociological implications of such purported anatomical differences, citing the work of the eminent naturalist Georges Cuvier, who dissected and preserved Baartman's genitalia after her death, as an example:

> Though Cuvier's conclusions from the presence of the genital flap were both erroneous and preposterous, they were part of a shift toward a polygenist anthropological paradigm asserting the static nature of certain non-European races, who could not be "civilized" and thus entered a phase that Paul Broca called "phyletic exhaustion"….this schema subsequently gave moral license to acts of brutality undertaken in the name of colonial conquest. (158)

Broca's model of "phyletic exhaustion," whereby specific races were not only differentiated from one another through the presumptive "detection" of a host of physical stigmata but also through the gradations in evolutionary potential revealed by these stigmata, is helpful here insofar as these classificatory regimes authorize the brutalities to which Bloom refers. In other words, according to the anthropological paradigm, when the physical stigmata of race ostensibly reveal[31] an absence of civilizing potential among specific races, eradication is the only recourse, particularly when such phyletic exhaustion is combined with a sexual voracity which renders uncontrolled reproduction a threat to the "civilized" races.

The equating of the racial and gendered Other with sexual voracity, then, is already deeply entrenched by the publication of *Dracula* in 1897. Furthermore, the geospatial component of this equation had been so long established that it operates almost without articulation or question, as when Stevenson's Enfield asserts that he has just returned from the end of the world. "The end of the world" that was Baartman's native home and Dracula's fictional domain was the breeding ground of sexual monsters, the loci of luxuriant but pernicious insatiability that, in the porous boundaries of self and state, threatened to infect the upright British Empire with a

[31] Quotation marks are used throughout this section to acknowledge the blatant racism of the ideologies prevailing in this period and of the terminology used to express them.

Dionysian wantonness contrary to Anglican codes of morality and industry. It is for this reason, as Shildrick argues, that the attempt to define and contain the racial other, particularly at the most intimate of bodily sites, assumes such force:

> Racial difference too often has been reduced to a focus on the sites of the body where there is an open intersection between inside and outside. The attention given to the forms of the mouths, noses, breasts, and genitalia may well speak…to an eroticization of the racial other, but I would suggest….as breaches in the body's surfaces—points of vulnerability for us all—such sites, in their evident or supposed difference, mark an uncertainty about the putatively self-contained human being. (52)

Not only do these interstitial spaces, these points of ambiguity between the body's insides and its outsides mirror the same ambivalence regarding bodily integrity that conjoined twins materialize, but they also inscribe on the purportedly singular body prevailing fears for the security of frontiers of the social body for which the citizen's body is a metonym.

Shildrick goes on to describe the attempt to analyze, document, and categorize the racial other through the quantification of somatic difference, citing Susan Stewart's assessment of the function of "freak display" in its various forms: "On display, the freak represents the naming of the frontier and the assurance that the wilderness, the outside, is now territory" (25). Stoker's novel, therefore, strikes a resonant chord with Britons already consumed by the ever-present threat of the outside Other, the forces that encircle and threaten to penetrate the heart of Empire. Thus, the title of this section, "Infection in the Vein," derives from Brian W. Aldiss' powerful reading of *Dracula*, which situates the external Other as an infectious agent:

> In this great transitional novel, we are not to remain among ancient things, whose distance brings comfort along with terror. The strength of Stoker's novel is that his evil Count, for all the world like a disease that cannot be checked, arrives in London. A barrier has been crossed; the infection has entered the modern vein. (qtd. Abbott 2)

In an iconic scene in Stoker's novel, the Count defines himself as an invasive and contagious force, asserting his wish "to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its death, and all that makes it what it is" (26). In this image, the Count has not only already penetrated the frontiers of the empire, but has infiltrated the heart of the colonial center itself. The contagion has spread from the periphery to the core, changing through infectious contact the social organism itself. Dracula's program here is particularly telling, suggesting the mechanism through which a virus alters the very structure of a cell[32] and ultimately leads to the wholesale transformation of the organism itself.[33]

While the novel echoes in important ways contemporary insights in the field of late Victorian biological science, concerns regarding the preservation of the body (and, in particular, of the blood) from infection are attended by highly political valences. The racial models which authorized the display of Baartman's body and galvanized the "scientific" study of others like her were deployed in the name of a project of cultural sanitizing in which the boundaries of the social body might be inoculated from the infections presence of the racial and the ethnic other. Indeed, scholars have long situated Stoker's novel within the context of the Eastern threat, identifying Count Dracula as emblematic of Western Europe's dread of the Ottoman East.

[32] The parallels between Dracula's life-change-death triad and the cellular changes associated with viral infection are striking. A virus infects the host body by first infiltrating the cellular boundaries (i.e. Dracula's moment of "be[ing] in the whirl and the rush"), affixing itself to the core structures of the cell, and then reprogramming the cell so that the ordinary processes of the cellular lifecycle (Dracula's premise of "change") are grotesquely transformed: the host cell is forced to reproduce at an extraordinary rate exact replicas of the viral agent while its own reproductive capacities are destroyed, ultimately resulting in the death of the healthy cell.

[33] While the exact mechanism through which cellular alteration occurs in the presence of a virus did not begin to be traced until the advent of the electron microscope in the 1930s, biologists had begun to identify infectious processes as early as the mid-1800s, with French, Dutch, and Russian scientists performing increasingly sophisticated work by the fin de siècle in the field of germ theory. Work in this field helped to popularize at the turn of the century insights into the role of microorganisms in causing disease through the infiltration and conquest of healthy bodies, imagery which captured the popular imagination and whose influence can be seen throughout the corpus of late nineteenth century British literature.

Though it seems undeniable that Dracula's status as an ancient Romanian aristocrat plays in important ways on the specific and deeply engrained fears of the Ottoman Empire and the spreading influences of Eastern Europe, Dracula is, at heart, a cipher, an enigmatic figure of indecipherable origins. The Count expresses his wish for anonymity in the same scene in which he describes his intention to revel in the teeming life of London: "I am content if I am like the rest, so that no man stops if he sees me, or pauses in his speaking if he hears my words, 'Ha! Ha! A stranger!'" (Ibid.). The diagnostic paradigms on which fin-de-siècle England relies would find such efforts to evade detection horrifying, the absorption and assimilation of the Other instantiating the infection which would irredeemably corrupt the social body in as much as the conquest of the social body, like the virus's conquest of the cell, depends first upon a false assimilation, the host's voluntary absorption of foreign agent, whom it wrongly believes to be akin to itself, only to discover the ineradicable and lethal difference when it is too late.

That Dracula's castle should appear on no known maps, that, to access it, one must leave behind the known world and enter a space seemingly without names, time, or laws, strongly parallels Enfield's "end of the world" imagery. In his first journey to Castle Dracula, Harker notes, "I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey Maps" (10). The sentiment is redoubled in a startling echo of Enfield's words when Van Helsing, recounting the vampire hunters' approach to the Count's domain, writes: "For we are going up and up, and all is oh so wild and rocky, as though it were the end of the world" (315). As such, Dracula may rightly be viewed as the paradigmatic geographical Other, his outsider status erasing and eclipsing all specificity, subsuming all demarcations of class, ethnicity, or gender beneath the blanket of Other/Outsider in this place where, van Helsing says, "Nature seem to

have sometime held her carnival" (Ibid.). Indeed, van Helsing's choice of words is instructive, recalling as they do Bakhtin's formulation of the *carnivalesque* in which hierarchical taxonomies dissolve in a lawless riot that respects no boundaries of power, order, or rationality. It is no coincidence, then, that in the Bakhtinian carnivalesque, it is the monstrous, the grotesque, and the transgressive which hold sway, the excesses of their corporeal bodies mirroring the new natural order which, like the profligate nature of Dracula's homeland, knows no order.

Van Helsing's description of Dracula's native country as the site where nature runs riot affirms Victorian evolutionary environmentalism, which would link moral, intellectual, and physiological attributes with environmental exposure. Like the riotous natural world of Romania in Van Helsing's descriptions, Dracula exemplifies a plasticity, an amorphous and uncategorizable nature, that enables him to operate on a multitude of representational levels, encompassing a host of collective anxieties, from fear of an encroaching religious threat (Islam) to concerns over economic systems (capitalism versus feudalism). Increasingly, however, Dracula has come to be recognized as a menace to established gender norms and hierarchies, and it is in this capacity that the character's relationship to Sarah Baartman carries the most resonance. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, a myriad of literary theorists have begun to identify Dracula as a *female* character, noting everything from his association with nature and the phases of the moon to his transport on the *Demeter* and the *Czarina Katherine* as signs of this (Williams 123).

While such readings of this iconic figure are certainly thought-provoking and plausible, the significance of such insights for the purposes of this study lies in what the popularity of this novel reveals about deeply-entrenched anxieties concerning the female body and, especially, the body of the female outsider—the foreigner, the threat that lies in wait at "the end of the world."

As Dikstra notes, "racial, sexual, and political prejudices converged during this period to make the sexual woman into one of the most terrifying human monsters of all time" (qtd. Shildrick 30). If sexual women were, as Dikstra notes, "the most terrifying human monsters of all time," then the threat posed by women in whom the sexual drive is magnified (i.e. "ethnic," especially African, women) simply cannot be quantified or contained.

Containment, however, was no mean feat, particularly in an England ruled by a powerful Queen, an England whose survival depended most immediately upon the sexual bodies of its mothers. The defining and the containment of the female body, and, especially, of reproductive female bodies, was predicated upon the identification and eradication of threats, both internal and external, to the sexual morality of the female subject. In the late nineteenth century, physicians and early psychologists began to take women as their primary source of study into the nature of the psyche, and, in particular, into mental illness. As was discussed early in this chapter, early practitioners of hypnotism concentrated their most intensive efforts on female patients deemed to be suffering from hysteria, which, according to the common medical wisdom of the time, was preeminently a "female" malady. An excerpt from the *Journal of Mental Science* is particularly telling here:

> The great excess of the female sex under the heading of the degenerative disorders is in accordance with general experience….There can be no doubt that the urinary and vaginal discharges of the insane are highly toxic….It is usually said that menstrual periods are accompanied by an exacerbation of insanity. That is by no means the rule according to my observations. (Urquhart 286)

It is important to note, however, that though these physicians and scientists were operating upon largely intangible systems—the conscious and the subconscious—the nineteenth century orientation toward somatic symptoms led scientists to the search for physical manifestations of

unseen processes,[34] as R. M. Bache argues in his 1891 essay, "Double Consciousness and Duality of the Mind:" "It is certainly conceded by all who come in general estimation within the category of thinkers, that psychology, as formerly studied, without basis in physiology, was fruitless" (362). As a result, the brain, blood, and organ systems of deceased asylum inmates were studied with rigorous scrutiny, while the behaviors (particularly those deemed to be pathological) of living patients were charted with an intensive eye toward attendant physical signs, with Dr. Urquhart asserting in the same article from *The Journal of Mental Science* that "the blood of the insane is the *dernier cri* of the modern investigator" (236). However, despite Dr. Urquhart's assertions to the contrary, among the most significant of the physical signs of degeneration, many physicians noted, was a perceived correlation between the onset of menstruation and mental illness in female patients. This nexus is articulated most poignantly in a mid-nineteenth century study of mesmerism and hysteria by Dr. William Davies, which describes the experience of a young female patient:

> Some reaction (of the nature of which we are quite ignorant) exerted by the uterine on the nervous system is probably the cause of hysteria in nine cases out of ten; this influence acting on persons untrained in self-control has for them an actuality to which their feeble and ill-regulated wills offer but little resistance, and they become the prey to their sensations….Hysterical phenomena are not common before the age of puberty. In this girl, analogous symptoms were produced at an earlier period….On the occurrence of menstruation for the first time—a period when hysterical affectations are always likely to occur, this anormal state, which had been produced artificially formerly, returned of its own accord. (315)

Psychologists and physicians of the era wrote extensively on the purported exacerbation of pathological behaviors with menstruation and found in menstrual blood and vaginal secretions

[34] Such a turn toward physiology is not at all surprising since, as has been discussed, fin de siècle Britain was assailed by fears of threats to the physical and the social body. Degeneration theories imaged both the individual citizen's body and the British racial body as imperiled by threats whose greatest powers lay in concealment. The first and best recourse within this paradigm was, of course, detection.

heightened quantities of "pathological indicators," cells and structures identified as hallmarks of mental illness. Low argues that within this context, female sexual anatomy was always already defined in terms of the atavistic and/or the pathological:

> Whereas the faculty of reason and the use of language distinguished men from apes in the great chain of being, female sexual physiology became the border territory between the humans and simians. Men were taken as iconic representations of race and women were defined primarily as sexual beings. Studies by [18th century scientists] Johann Blumenbach, a biologist, and Georges Buffon, a naturalist, aimed at differentiating female humans from animals concentrated on…menstruation, the clitoris, the breasts, and the hymen….The case of Sarah Baartman illustrates the fine dividing line between woman and primitivity, as the black woman became a symbol of regressive sexuality and sexual promiscuity….[indicative of] a racial trajectory of gender where atavism, degeneration, disease, and corruption are embodied signs. **(**21)

By defining the body and blood of the female as the central locus of pathology, physicians and psychologists in one fell swoop positioned not only all females but also those "feminized" Others within the purview of medical science and punitive social authorities. That Dracula should increasingly be read by contemporary theorists as female is no coincidence within this paradigm, as the binary oppositions upon which European Imperialism operated at this time functioned primarily according to a gendered duality, with colonized and "non-Western" spaces functioning as the "female" counterpart to imperialist, Euro-American masculinity. As such, the "non-male" figure, which included not only biological females, but those excluded from the white male hierarchy (including racial, ethnic, sexual, and economic "others") were positioned as the intrinsically diseased, subject to a dangerous and, importantly, a communicable pathology.

Within this context, John Glendenning's focus on *Dracula*'s "preoccupation with contemporary medicine" (126) becomes particularly instructive. Glendenning argues that the victory of the vampire hunters will depend on their

> identifying the source of internal decay as an invasive foreign body to be isolated, expelled, and irrevocably destroyed, a process of surgery and disinfection. The movement is from recognition to resistance to counterattack. Thus progress as an idea and an historical process can, it appears, be saved, first because its enemy is alien, not really a part of itself, and second, because its identification and isolation as primitive Other makes it vulnerable to modern capabilities. Opposition to Dracula builds up in a manner that mimics the organizational, scientific, and technological development of the modern world and thereby appears to reconfirm its ascendancy. (Ibid.)

Furthermore, as indicated by the association of this pathology with menstrual blood and female sex organs, the disease which the vampire hunters must eradicate is deeply rooted in female (and "female") sexuality. The gendered, racial, ethnic, and economic "Other" is fundamentally a sexual monster, operating in contradistinction to the sexually frigid, because preeminently "disembodied," Enlightenment male subject. Dracula, then, can easily be configured as interchangeable with the female insofar as each represents an embodied and rapacious sexuality that simultaneously devours and infects its victims. In his *Married Life and Happiness*, Victorian social theorist W. J. Robinson differentiates between the abstemious and the profligate wife:

> [wives] who are satisfied with occasional relations—not more than once in two weeks or ten days—may be considered normal, but there is the opposite type of woman who is a great danger to the health and even the very life of her husband. I refer to the hypersexual woman, to the wife with an excessive sexuality. It is to her that the name of vampire can be applied in the literal sense. (qtd. Cavallaro 182)

Such a correlation of moral, psychological, and physical degeneration with the embodied signs of the female, and, in particular, of the sexualized female, lies at the heart of *Dracula*. Time

and again, indications of vampiric infection are read through corporeal indicators centering most often on the *exacerbation* of feminine attributes: swollen and ruddy lips, pale and luminous skin, and soft and silky voices make the vamp exceedingly beautiful and irresistibly sexual, with the most stalwart of men falling prey to their charms, as does Arthur when asked for a kiss by Lucy in her vampiric trance and when Van Helsing is mesmerized by the beauty of Dracula's wives, whom he has come to kill.

The association of the sexualized female body with infection—and with vampirism—is an important one, and literary critics are paying increasing attention to an unexpected consequence of the encounter with the sexual female vampire: the "feminization" of the male. Each of the male vampire hunters suffer emasculation at the hands of the vamps, an emasculation that most often manifests in hysterical breakdown. Though physicians and psychologists, as has been stated, found hysteria to be an almost exclusively female ailment, fin-de-siècle Gothic novels, in particular, featured upright British gentlemen succumbing to the forces of hysteria. This is evident in *Dracula*, in which each male character, from the aristocratic Holmwood, to the responsible businessman Harker, to the learned men of science, Van Helsing and Seward, at one point or another fall prey to hysteria in the face of unimaginable circumstances. But such effects can also be found in Stevenson's infamously male-oriented novella, in which Jekyll weeps and shrieks like a woman or an animal (also associated with the female), in which the working class Poole struggles to maintain his masculine fortitude and self-command, and in which the earnest Utterson must marshal all of his self-command to maintain control of his own body and stop the trembling of his hand.

This feminization of the British male, regardless of class, profession, or lineage, exemplifies a crucial concern at the end of the nineteenth century: the collapse of British

masculinity under the infectious influence of the female (or "feminized") Other. In positioning pathology within the body of the female, and particularly at the site of the sexual organs, social engineers and medical experts alike sought to identify and to contain infection at its origin, for example through the regulation of prostitution via the Communicable Disease Acts. It is within this context that Baartman's treatment by both the public at large and by the scientific community can best be understood. If the sex organs of the female were a significant locus of disease and if sexuality were a vital form of transmission, then the body of a woman who bore the physical stigmata of such pathology, who corporealized the rapacity and uncontrollability of female sexuality, would naturally serve to fetishize both the danger of female embodiment and the requirement to monitor, contain, and regulate it.

Importantly, however, as *Dracula* reveals, such regulatory projects are, ultimately, futile. Dracula's mutable and unpredictable nature renders any efforts to define and direct him impossible. As has been noted, the vampire hunters, through their "powers of combination" harness all of the resources of the modern British Empire in order to combat their foe. From the industry of the British man (and woman (Mina)) of business and the learned rationalism of the scientist, to the hardy masculinity of the adventurer and the immeasurable resources of the aristocrat, Dracula's foes wage a state-of-the-art battle against an ancient enemy and are, at least temporarily, victorious in their attempts.

The qualifier above is important, however, in that the binaries between self and Other upon which the victory of British modernity depends are porous and unstable. Indeed, the greatest power and the greatest threat of Dracula and his ilk lie in their adaptability. In his analysis of Victorian evolutionary science in late nineteenth century gothic fiction Glendenning argues that Dracula undermines prevailing tenets juxtaposing regressive primitivism with

progressive evolution insofar as Dracula is seen to exhibit a Darwinian capacity for adaptation and survival, evolving into the image of the bourgeois Victorian gentleman even as the vampire hunters devolve into criminality (for example, in their breaking and entering into Dracula's London homes).

If, as this essay has argued, fears of degeneration inform fin de siècle gothic literature and are problematized by the era's representation of extraordinary bodies and the questions they provoke concerning the integrity and stability of the self, then the symbiotic and parallel relationships between the vampire hunters and the vampires themselves is particularly important. As Glendenning argues, in evolutionary literature, the process of progress is neither predictable nor unidirectional. Just as Dracula, like the virus he symbolizes, increases in strength through a process of intelligent environmental adaptation, the vampire hunters, in combatting their enemy, become like him. In an era in which criminality was linked in fundamental ways to primitivism and atavism, the vampire hunters' thwarting of social, moral, and judicial law blurs the boundaries between the civilized and the primitive. While Dracula assumes the habits of the bourgeois gentleman, amassing a prodigious library and relying more on money than force in his matriculation through London, the vampire hunters lie, trespass, and murder. Van Helsing situates their methods in the terms of both a Crusade and a patriotic duty:

> It is that we become as him, that we henceforward become foul things of the night like him, without heart or conscience, preying on the bodies and the souls of those we love best. To us forever are the gates of heaven shut, for who shall open them to us again? We go on for all time abhorred by all, a blot on the face of God's sunshine, an arrow in the side of Him who died for man. But we are face to face with duty, and in such case, must we shrink? (209)

In this instance, van Helsing's reference to "the bodies and souls of those we love best" can only be a reference to Mina and to the trope of the British "good woman" for which she stands.

Encounters between Dracula and the vampire hunters revolve most pointedly around the quest for the control of the female body. When the hunters discover Mina feeding on Dracula beside the unconscious body of her husband, the Count boasts of his victory before eluding the hunters' grasp:

> You think to baffle me, you with your pale faces all in a row, like sheep in a butcher's….You think you have left me with no place to rest, but I have more. My revenge is just begun! I have spread it over centuries, and time is on my side. Your girls that you love are mine already. And through them you and others shall yet be mine, my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed. (267)

The forces of modernity, like the advances in medical science which seek to ferret out the germs of pathology threatening the British race, are mocked by Dracula in this scene, situating the contest between the hunters and the Count as a conflict between civilization and regression, between progress and primitivism.[35] Significantly, Dracula's conquest is through the reproductive capacities of the sexual woman. Rendered vulnerable already from within by the pathology of "female blood," exposure to the infectious agent of the extrinsic other catalyzes the corruption latent within the female body, unleashing in particular the potent and uncontrollable forces of the sexual female. The unconscious and, in its helpless passivity, feminized body of Mina's husband, lying vulnerably as it does in the presence his wife's betrayal reflects the

[35] The Count's description would have been particularly chilling for Britons in the late Victorian era for whom the powerful influence of degeneration theories called into question any certainty in progressive evolution. At best, the march toward ever-higher stages of evolution was a fond hope; at worst, it was a fading dream amid what were taken to be growing signs of the triumphant forces of de-evolution, of the regression to more primitive states exemplified by what was taken to be the superior vitality and fecundity of the pathological and the degenerate. This is a sentiment echoed in van Helsing's description of the Count" "In him some vital principle have in strange way found their utmost. And as his body keep strong and grow and thrive, so his brain grow too" (278). In other words, the intrinsic capacity for survival which is characteristic of such pathological beings combines with Darwinian adaptation and, just as evolution had once enabled the "desirable" creatures of the earth to endure through accommodation with their environment, this same adaptive capability, when found in a stronger being, will ensure the continuation and, ultimately, the conquest of his species—the triumph of force and cunning over effete civility.

emasculation of all male bodies in the presence of the desiring female. It is a role reversal which, as the Count's threats reflect, destroys the Victorian family structure not just in the moment[36] but in perpetuity. Through the fertile body of the (pathologically) sexual woman, husbands, wives, and their off-spring are forever changed, driving the atavism through which men become "sheeps" and "jackals."

Thus, despite the van Helsing's disavowal of any resemblance between themselves and the reviled Other, however, and contrary to their assertions that such an identification would constitute a moral and social death, the nexus between the hunters and their enemy is vast and far-reaching. The hunters not only "become as him," after all, in their methods, but in a context in which the blood truly is the life, the foundational force of both survival and of corruption, the hunters' iconic image of ideal Victorian motherhood, Mina, gives birth to a child of supernatural and polygamous lineage: he bears in his veins the blood of four fathers, two mothers, and that undefinable third force that eludes quantification, prediction, or control. Thus, the expulsion fantasy which the novel's second half endeavors to enact is significant in this regard in as much as the expulsion, ultimately, fails. Not only has Dracula's immortality enabled him to spread his infection across centuries, finding sanctuary, "places to rest," throughout the globe, but in his brides, the cherished ones the hunters would redeem, he creates the vectors of his infectiousness. As Mina's pregnancy demonstrates, the only means to stop the spread of the Count's disease is to end the women's reproductive and/or physical lives, an imperative that Mina herself invokes as the hunters pursue the Count to Romania. In seeking to persuade in particular Harker to take an oath to end her life when it became apparent that redemption, purification of the vampire's

[36] The scene is not only polygamous and adulterous but also androgynous, with the Count seeming to breastfeed Mina as Harker lies submissively at her side and as Mina voraciously seeks her own gratification in the body of an/other.

"unclean" influence, is impossible, she couches her appeal in the language of the protection of the community through the preservation of the woman's body:

> Think, dear, that there have been times when brave men have killed their wives and their womenkind, to keep them from falling into the hands of the enemy. Their hands did not falter any the more because those that they loved implored them to slay them. It is men's duty toward those whom they love, in such times of sore trial! (287-288)

The shift here from "wives" to "womenkind" is instructive in that it reaffirms the communal nature of the reproductive female body. "Womenkind" is the collective upon whom the integrity of the social body depends. Significantly, as the novel approach its climax and van Helsing and Seward, the physicians, read the embodied signs of Mina's deterioration, the pledge to end her life recurs to them in the increasingly medicalized term, *euthanasia.* For Seward, the invocation of the medical term is a comfort, sanitizing the act by couching it in the language of compassionate care. In his journal, Seward states, "'Euthanasia' is an excellent and a comforting word! I am grateful to whoever invented it" (291).

As will be seen in the final two chapters of this study, the turn toward professional medicine and its discourses after the turn of the century that is foreshadowed in van Helsing's use of the word *euthanasia* poses an increasing challenge in orientations toward and representations of extraordinary bodies. Thus, the second half of this study will center upon two masterpieces of modernist literature, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway,* to explore shifting and often ambivalent perspectives of the extraordinary body in which the ascendance of professionalized medicine in the early decades of the twentieth century plays a particularly significant role. The extraordinary body in the high Victorian era and in the fin de siècle is a profoundly visible one, one whose material difference is both unassailable and

tangibly present—in the freak shows of the countryside, the drawing rooms of the elite, the museums and operating theatres of the scientists, or in the unstable body of the citizen self. After the turn of the century, however, the preeminence of medical discourse achieves what the domesticating influences of the second Bleak House, the self-slaughter of Jekyll/Hyde, and the expulsion of Count Dracula could not: the material erasure of the singular body through its transmutation into the discourse of pathology.

Chapter 3:
Discursive Monsters/Monstrous Discourse: Re/Presenting the Unspeakable Body in Joyce's Ulysses

The body is sung about, ranted about, abused, cut about by doctors, but never talked about.
Wyndham Lewis

[T]his monster, the body, this miracle, its pain, will soon make us taper into…the raptures of transcendentalism.
Virginia Woolf

From the Victorian to the Modern: Untamed Matter into Unruly Discourse

To this point, this study has concerned itself with representations of extraordinary embodiment in Victorian and fin-de-siècle Britain. As has been shown, these eras are characterized by a fixation on the somatic, a near obsession with the verities of the material body in its myriad forms. Within this context, then, the material body in the high Victorian era and the fin de siècle is an omnipresent entity, yoked to, invoked by, and deployed for the symbolic manifestation and the collective problematization of prevailing cultural anxieties, questions, and concerns. As was seen in the analysis of Dickens' *Bleak House* in the opening chapter of this study, the excessive corporeality of the British giants on wide-scale display on exhibition tours and freak show circuits manifests the disproportionality that figured so predominantly in Esther Summerson's "having grown too large" during the incipient stages of her smallpox infection. This infection, as was noted, would leave indelible marks of the transgressiveness of Esther's body in the scars etched into her flesh, denoting the material presence of this upper-class woman in prohibited spaces—the slums and shanties of the "second" London where contagious illnesses reign—and aligning her with such celebrities as Daniel Lambert, who, more than four decades after his death, continued to embody in the memory of his 700lb frame the image of John Bull, of imperial England, and, in particular, of London itself. Esther's illness-ravaged face, like the lethal excessiveness of Daniel Lambert's flesh and the prodigious growth of the British Empire which he came to symbolize, corporealized the private and the public body as unmindful of boundaries and as unimpeded by limits.

Likewise, the second chapter of this study centered upon the gothic romances of the fin de siècle and the interrogation of bodily and psychic integrity as materialized in the bodies of conjoined twins and "Hottentot Venuses" and fictionalized in the writings of R.L. Stevenson and Bram Stoker. This chapter argued that Stevenson's and Stoker's iconic monsters, Hyde and Dracula, problematize ubiquitous turn-of-the-century concerns over the health of the British[37] body, the solidity of the English mind, and the security of the English race. Furthermore, like the mid-century's fascination with "monsters of disproportion," by the turn of the century, freakery and freak performance had settled more firmly on the extraordinary bodies of conjoined twins and ethnic and racial[38] others. The Hilton and McKoy sisters would perpetuate and amplify the British fascination with conjoined bodies that Chang and Eng Bunker, the eponymous "Siamese twins," inaugurated earlier in the century. Likewise, Sarah Baartman, whose premature death in 1815 at the age of 25 proved no barrier to the cult of celebrity that would grow with the attendant medicalization of sexuality and the crystallization of eugenics-inspired racial theory, would herself continue to embody the centuries-old imago of the "Hottentot Venus." Through the strategic display of her dissected body—and more, particularly, medical drawings, descriptions, and carefully preserved "specimens" of her genitalia, including the "apron" which would come to signify the pathologized sexuality of both her gender and her race—Baartman would come to exemplify extraordinary embodiment as socio-cultural construction, the defining and elaboration of the boundaries of the normal and the normative through a fetishistic appropriation and display of the body, or, more significantly, of its *parts*.

The texts and the historical figures with which the texts have been aligned in the preceding chapters signify nineteenth century Britain's preoccupation with material corporeality,

[37] This is particularly true of the English body, which is conceptualized as being simultaneously a public and a private body.

[38] This is a focus that was trained especially upon those racial and ethnic others who were also female.

a preoccupation reflected, interrogated, and reimagined in the social reform novels of the high Victorian era and in the gothic romances of the fin-de-siècle. The remainder of this study, however, will theorize and problematize an identifiable break with traditional modes of representing the extraordinary body, modes derived, as has been discussed, primarily from the Enlightenment era and informed by Linnaean principles of empirical observation and taxonomic classification. The Enlightenment ethos of "dare to know" inspired throughout the nineteenth century the taxonomical impulses which mandated the up-close analysis and description of the material body, illustrated most notably in the voluminous writings of physicians and anatomists in this era.

In the remaining two chapters of this study, we will turn our attention to two masterpieces of high modernism, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, in an attempt to locate and problematize a definitive shift in orientations toward the extraordinary body in this era. As will be shown, the ascendance of the medical model, derived from clinical practice and representing the triumph of the professionalization of scientific modes of medical practice, around the turn of the century troubled traditional representational paradigms through which the visibility of the material body was linked in powerful ways to programs of collective identity-formation, with singular bodies, in their gross materiality, were made to signify, in the tangible form of flesh, the anxieties, questions, and concerns of the Imperial body. By the fin de siècle and the early twentieth century, however, the dominance of the professional, clinical medicine had rendered the extraordinary body at once pathological and discursive. The triad of diagnosis-prognosis-treatment enabled the domestication of the singular body through its cooptation into the medical model. Through this pathologizing of the extraordinary body, as Rosemarie Garland-Thomson notes, what once had been prodigious has now become predictable, the product of a

disease process accessible to and comprehended by medical experts alone. Thus, in rendering the prodigy pathological, authority over and responsibility for him/her shifts away from the collective[39] and into the hands of the specialist; the prodigy's province moves from the drawing room exhibition tours of Europe to the closed doors of the clinic. The freak and the wonder become the patient and the pathology.

This chapter's study of Joyce's *Ulysses*, however, will highlight the contentiousness of the medical model's struggle for ascendancy. Indeed, as will be shown through the analysis of what Andre Cormier has described as Joyce's "disability consciousness: that is, a capacity to understand and react to the injustices of living with a condition that is almost universally misunderstood and traduced" (204), *Ulysses'* preoccupation with both the reality of the material body and, above all, with its representation, signifies Joyce's own struggle with the growing dominance of medical discourse in shaping the understanding, representation, and treatment of the embodied subject. While Cormier locates Joyce's "disability consciousness" in the latter's own experience of near blindness and of the bouts of illness with frequently left him bedbound,[40] the corporeal bodies which populate and consume Joyce's iconic novel exemplify the myriad forms that flesh may take, its unsettling and intractable instability, and the inherent insufficiency

[39] This is not to valorize the condition of the "prodigious" above that of the "pathological", nor is this to suggest that absolutism is meant to be inferred here. The appropriation of the singular body in the era of freak shows and exhibition tours was an often abusive process, the hallmark of the exploitation to which the extraordinarily embodied individual was subject. The appropriation of the embodied "other" by the collective and for the purpose of community identity-formation restricts and often wholly denies the agency and autonomy of the extraordinarily embodied subject. Nevertheless, as has been shown, the material presence of the singular body carries with it a subversive potentiality unequaled within the diagnostic paradigm. As Robert Bodgan has argued, the freak show, by its very nature, threatens prevailing hierarchical structures and normative modes of being insofar as the freak, in the moment of display, possesses the power to *talk back* to the spectator. It is for this reason, then, that absolutes are untenable here: the "appropriation" of the freak performer is never all-encompassing. Likewise, as will be shown in this chapter, the hegemony of medical discourse is similarly and inevitably only partial. The extraordinary subject is never fully prodigious, nor is s/he ever wholly pathological. The intent of this study, then, is to demonstrate the processes by which the singular body functions as construct and as social signifier.

[40] To be certain, Joyce's own extensive medical training as a once-aspiring physician informs as much as any "disability consciousness" his concern with medical discourse and its effects.

of discourse to represent it. For Joyce, the empirical language of medical discourse, like the ostensible realism of Victorian novels, deforms and defamiliarizes that which it would domesticate and illuminate, cloaking an oppressive and dictatorial fiction beneath the fabric of a false verisimilitude. The fractured, frequently crude, and often disturbing discourse of Joyce's "epic of the cycles of the body" (qtd. in Brown 11) signify the author's attempt to contend with the amorphous and enigmatic flesh through the cultivation of a representational strategy seeking to rescue the material body from the hegemonic abstractions of clinical discursive practice, restoring the disruptive flesh that exceeds, shatters, and defies the diagnostic paradigm and refuses containment within the medical model.[41]

Within this context, then, this study can usefully be conceived as divided into two distinct sections: the Victorian/Edwardian and the Modern. This bifurcation is foregrounded within this study to identify and problematize a recognizable shift in orientations toward material bodies that occurred between the Victorian and Edwardian eras and the modernist period,[42] a shift which, as

[41] It must be noted, however, that the ascendance of the clinical medical model was by no means complete or uncontested. Though modern professionalized medicine, as it is practiced today, began to emerge in earnest in the eighteenth and, especially, the nineteenth centuries, the clinical model has never been without its detractors. Even as the modern medical model began to dominate the field in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, powerful counter-movements actively sought to refute and check its power. Among the most important of these were the antivivisectionists, who protested against the use of animal subjects in laboratory testing, upon which the clinical model, rooted in scientific experimental practices, is based. Other significant factions opposing the ascendance of the clinical medical model were various social reform movements which sought to secure the public health through the development of social programs and organizations benefiting the poor, the sick, and the exploited. Such groups also endeavored to improve legislative practices, including the repeal of what they deemed to be oppressive laws targeting impoverished women (prostitutes in particular), including the Contagious Disease Act and the various Poor Laws. Organizations advocating for the rights of midwives also sought to contest the growing power of clinical medicine, which would expel female practitioners from what had for centuries been deemed a "woman's" field: the facilitation of childbirth. By the late nineteenth century, legislation such as the Poor Laws and the Contagious Disease Acts had placed legal and political authority in the hands of physicians who, with their superior capacity to "read" the body's physical signs, were alone capable of assessing the efficacy of these reforms, ensuring their enforcement, and recommending strategic modifications as needed. Opposition from the camps of the vivisectionists, the midwives, and others provided potent counter-narratives to the ascension of the clinical medical model.

[42] For the purposes of this study, we will locate this rupture as occurring around 1910, the year in which, as Woolf famously declared, "human character changed" ("Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" 320). The assignation of a definitive date is, nevertheless, a problematic and vexed proposition, insofar as the first shadows of literary

will be explored in this chapter and the next, begins to reconceive the material body less as corporeal substance and more as discourse. This shift, as Kevin Bell argues, signifies literary modernism's concern with the failures of denotation, the recognition of a simultaneous material and discursive lack which modernist experimentation seeks at once to interrogate, to mask, and to remediate. Bell writes,

> Modernism is distinguished by this incessant thematization of its fundamental disengagement from strict designation—by its ongoing encounter with the presences of its own nothingness…Indeed, modernism's notoriously difficult figurality always generates multiplicity of longing gestures toward gesture's opposite—substantiality. (9)

As will be shown in the remainder of this chapter, discourse, and, in particular, *experimental* discourse intervenes in and endeavors to remediate crises of representation that are occasioned by crises of substantiality—namely, by the emergence of the monstrous, unlivable[43] body. As will be seen, however, literary modernism's efforts to contend with the corporeal body avail themselves less of the freakish bodies which inhabit Victorian and, especially, fin de siècle Gothic literature. While, as this analysis will show, disabled bodies populate Joyce's' *Ulysses*, in literary modernism, the conditions of material embodiment are configured as increasingly problematic, regardless of how proximal such bodies may appear to be to the normative ideal.

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modernism can be detected as far back as the 1880s and 1890s. Nevertheless, as Woolf's declaration shows, a myriad of pivotal cultural, political, and ideological developments occurred in 1910 which precipitated a recognizable turning away from Victorianism and helped to usher in a definitively modernist aesthetic and ideological orientation. In 1910, King Edward VII died, leading to what Peter Stansky in his *On or About December 1910: Early Bloomsbury and its Intimate World* has described as an increasing political fractiousness in which shared allegiances under the auspices of the monarchy, a core tenet of Victorianism, no longer were assumed or dominant. At the same time, the modernist aesthetic which had prevailed across continental Europe for years began to take belated root in Britain as a result of Roger Fry's famous exhibition, "Manet and the Post-Impressionists", which featured the works of Gauguin, Cezanne, van Gogh, Matisse, and Picasso, and which ultimately toppled the reign of Victorian verisimilitude in the arts.

[43] I use this term within the context of Judith Butler's theories of the abject body, that body which, in its transgression of the norm, simultaneously reaffirms and enforces that norm. The "unlivable" body, within this paradigm, is one whose expulsion from the community, the social body, is authorized by its subversion of "natural" laws and orders, those implicit and explicit codes which render the body livable and for which transgression constitutes a social, if not a physical, death.

Indeed, from the turn of the twentieth century on, the "normate" body is increasingly configured as fictive, a state of perfection at once unattainable and insisted upon in an increasingly medicalized modernity that is coming to recognize health as a collective responsibility and obligation. Within this context, Quetelet's figure of *l'homme moyen* (qtd. in Davis, "J'Accuse!" 38) arises to haunt modernity's experience and representations of corporeal embodiment, rendering all bodies pathological and all embodied subjects monstrous.

As Christopher Lawrence notes, it is in the nineteenth century that the medical case history, based upon clinical examination and the deployment of a theory of the "normal" derived from the emerging field of statistical population analysis, began to assume priority in medical practice, ultimately solidifying the links between the physical body and the analysis and description of the observing expert, the physician. It is also in this period that, as Lawrence further argues, the estrangement of the patient from his/her medical narrative began to emerge, as patient self-reporting began to be usurped by processes of clinical observation:

> By the end of the nineteenth century, diseases, even when regarded as engendered by self-neglect, were being designated specific, often isolable, biological processes, pathological deviations from *normal* physiological processes as a whole….Correspondingly, diagnosis was no longer a preliminary act, it was now the most significant and difficult clinical skill. Ideally, diagnosis was defined as going beyond the symptoms to the identification of the biological process that was common to all who suffered from the disease…. . For, in the bacteriology laboratory, disease processes were accounted reproducible in experimental animals, away from the ward and outside of the body of any particular sufferer. (ch. 3)

To be sure, patient narratives continued to be an expected and important component of the medical encounter, but the pride of place once reserved for the patient narrative diminished in the face of the development of the SOAP (subjective/objective/assessment/plan) method upon which modern clinical medicine is largely based and through which only the first of the quadripartite

process incorporates the patient as the active agent and narrator of his/her own embodied experience. Further, the SOAP paradigm exemplifies what Foucault has identified as the cooptation of the patient into discourse, the transmutation of the patient's body into the field of medical writing: "It is (clinical) description, or, rather, the implicit labour of language in description that authorizes the transformation of symptom into sign and the passage of patient to disease and from the individual to the conceptual" (*The Birth of the Clinic* 114). From the objective analysis of the patient's body by the medical authority comes the insertion of the patient into the diagnostic paradigm whereby individual embodied experience is subsumed into a rubric of medical description upon which the present (diagnosis) and the future (prognosis and treatment) of the material body are inscribed.

Joyce problematizes this shifting orientations toward the material body in the Hades episode, as Bloom reflects at the graveside of Paddy Dingham:

> Your heart perhaps but what price the fellow in the six feet by two with his toes to the daisies? No touching that. Seat of the affections. Broken heart. A pump after all, pumping thousands of gallons of blood everyday. One day it gets bunged up: and there you are. Lots of them lying around here: lungs, hearts, livers. Old rusty pumps: damn the thing else. The resurrection and the life. Once you are dead you are dead. That last day idea. Knocking them all up out of their graves. Come forth, Lazarus! And he came fifth and lost the job. Get up! Last day! Then every fellow mousing around for his liver and his lights and his traps. Find damn all of himself that morning. Pennyweight of powder in a skull. Twelve grammes one penny weight. Troy measure. (89)

Bloom's musings on the body of the corpse are significant here in that they reflect the substitution of an empiricist orientation for a romantic and theological one. The passage begins and ends with the invocation and rejection of traditional paradigms of the transcendental body, from the idealized image of the heart as the "seat of affections" to the allusion to the resurrection of the Christian body. In the place of these images comes an orientation toward the body that is

highly clinical: the heart is described as a "pump," while the decomposition of the postmortem brain can be measured with the accuracy of a medical examiner.[44]

Even as Bloom's reflections echo the discourse of the clinic in their descriptions of the heart pumping its "thousands of gallons of blood everyday," his formulation nevertheless establishes and affirms a strong distinction between himself and the expert clinician. The fatal ailments to which the heart is vulnerable are described by Bloom in the slang of the lay person. His casual use of the phrase "bunged up" to refer to a constellation of conditions for which only the expert may use, or even know, the proper term situates him outside of the scope of medical knowledge and its discourse, making the body and its condition foreign, a stranger whose language Bloom does not speak. Indeed, as Judith Butler notes in her analysis of hate speech, the nexus between language and action is intimate and insuperable:

> [R]acist epithets not only relay a message of racial inferiority, but that "relaying" it the verbal institutionalization of that very subordination. Thus, hate speech is understood not only to communicate an offensive idea or set of ideas but also to enact the very message it communicates: the very communication is at once a form of conduct. (ch. 2)

Within the context of Butler's theory of linguistic performativity, the tension demonstrated in Bloom's use of scientific (the heart as a "pump") and non-scientific (the heart is "bunged up") terminology reflects a failure of discourse that estranges Bloom from the body of his friend. Moreover, as Butler's theory suggests, this halting language functions as a mode of conduct

[44] Joyce's deployment of the language of currency is significant here, however, in implying a link between the empirical quantification of the material body and the assignation of its economic value. Lennard Davis has argued that the relative "value" of the physical body derives from its capacity for economic production; hence, according to Davis, the recuperability and, therefore, the "worth" of the disabled body is defined by the expert's estimation of the probability of such a body's return, after therapeutic intervention, to an adequate measure of productive viability. Davis writes that this value-laden rehabilitative model is one driven by "an industrial mentality that saw workers as interchangeable and therefore sought to create a universal worker whose physical characteristics would be uniform, as would the result of their labors" (*Disability Studies Reader*, Introduction)

through which the use of language enables, authorizes, and performs Bloom's deference to the medical authorities which alone can define the maladies by which this mysterious "pump" gets "bunged up." That Bloom's linguistic codes are not absolute, however, is significant in as much as they demonstrate that the pathologizing of Dingham's body is, itself, not absolute. Though Bloom's deployment of a medicalized discourse is impartial and inexpert, it is not wholly inaccessible to him as a lay person. Likewise, Bloom's juxtaposition of specialized discourse with folk colloquialisms is nevertheless effective in communicating his ruminations on the material body of his friend; the result is an idiosyncratic and highly personal discourse of the body that unsettles the hegemonic aims of medical discourse.

In addition to the clinical encounter's appropriation of the patient body into the field of medical discourse, such an encounter also effects a radical reconstitution of the physical body under the auspices of the medical paradigm. If modern medicine not only enacts the isolation of the disease from the individual, it also alienates the constituent parts of the body from the whole self, including, in particular, requiring the estrangement of the "pathological" element from the ideally "normate" subject. This fracturing of the patient body into discrete loci of the expert's attention and intervention constitutes a profound departure from traditional forms of medical practice. Lawrence notes that "In the eighteenth century, the illness which followed irresponsibility was, patient and doctor agreed, a deviation from the sufferer's own *natural* state. At any moment, the disease was the whole condition of the sufferer, inseparable from him" (ch. 3).

The emergence of the SOAP method is an important illustration of the ascension of the modern professionalized medical paradigm which, as this study suggests, powerfully impacts the conceptualization and representation of the human body and, in particular, of those bodies

traditionally configured as extraordinary and/or aberrant. Though the famous Oxen of the Sun episode has been widely recognized as a tour-de-force cycle through the history of English literature, the episode's problematizing of this discursive medicalization of the body has received relatively little attention. A passage early within the episode, however, is helpful here, as Joyce mocks the obfuscating power of medical discourse even as he reflects on its growing reach across modern Ireland:

> It is not why therefore we shall wonder if, as the best historians relate, among the Celts, who nothing that was not in its nature admirable admired, the art of medicine shall have been highly honoured. Not to speak of hostels, leperyards, sweating chambers, plaguegraves, their greatest doctors…have sedulously set down the divers methods by which the sick and the relapsed found again health whether the malady had been the trembling withering or loose boyconnell flux. Certainly in every public work which in it anything of gravity contains preparation should be with importance commensurate and therefore a plan by them was adopted… whereby maternity was so far from all accident possibility removed that whatever care the patient in that all hardest of woman hour chiefly required and not solely for the copiously opulent but also for her who not being sufficiently moneyed scarcely and often not even scarcely could subsist valiantly and for an inconsiderable emolument was provided. (321)

The passage refers specifically to Mina Purefoy's three days' labor at the National Maternity Hospital but suggests the ascendance of clinical medicine, a growing dominance which inflects even that which had traditionally been regarded as distinct from medical practice: childbirth. Joyce's assumption of both the "opulent" woman and the woman "not…sufficiently moneyed" under the paradigms and practices of obstetric medicine represents a definitive shift from Victorian praxis insofar as the all-encompassing reach of the maternity hospital subordinates once-dominant identity markers[45] to that imposed by the medical model itself. Prior to the turn of the century, childbirth had been excluded from the purview of medical practice, often considered

[45] These include the demarcations of class and ethnicity.

a private matter to be attended only by (female) midwives, who were often illiterate and possessed no training beyond the passing on of folk methods from woman to woman. Moreover, modalities of childbirth were profoundly inflected by class and social status. While lower class women sought the care of midwives or other female attendants, elite women, particularly by late century, would be cared for by *accoucheurs*, [46] who often would have received at least some degree of training in the field of obstetrics. The proliferation of maternity or "laying in" hospitals in the final decades of the nineteenth century was driven chiefly by the demand for improved and more accessible care for working and lower class women, while the affluent continued to deliver at home, attended by accoucheurs or by "gentlemen physicians."[47] Joyce's assertion in the final lines of this passage that the maternity hospital in which Mina Purefoy lies is one which shelters wealthy and impoverished women alike exemplifies the increasing power of the clinical model, as class and status demarcations are subsumed beneath the paradigm of "patient," rendering pregnant bodies uniform, interchangeable, and pathological.

Moreover, this uniformity of the "pathologically" pregnant body is accomplished by and authorized through medical writing. In this passage, it is the "plan," authored by the eminent physicians so admired, according to Joyce, by the Celts, which homogenizes the diverse female bodies seeking care within the confines of the maternity hospital. The methods by which the delivering woman will be treated are defined in advance, for the sake of safeguarding her from

[46] Such professionals were also often referred to as "male midwives."

[47] As Terrie Romano notes, by the mid-nineteenth century, medical practitioners were largely divided into two camps, the "gentlemen physicians" and the clinicians. The gentlemen physicians were largely from the upper classes, had received a classical education (usually at Oxford), were members of the Royal Colleges, and served as consultants in London and surrounding areas. Clinicians were general practitioners who derived from the middle class, were frequently licensed by the Society of Apothecaries and members of the College of Surgeons. Unlike the classical training of the gentlemen physicians, clinicians had received a more rigorous scientific education, one that frequently included experience in the dissecting rooms and experimental laboratories shunned by the Oxford-trained consultants. While the gentlemen physicians attended to the London elite, frequenting the homes of the wealthy and the affluent, general practitioners served the working classes and the poor in the growing numbers of hospitals and clinics in and around the major cities.

"all accident possible." In doing so, her body is surveilled, described, and defined within the clinical triad,[48] illustrating once again the estrangement of the once-familiar body through its cooptation into medical discourse.

Nevertheless, Joyce's mock heroic tone within this passage provides another salient example of the author's attempt to advance a viable counter-narrative to the growing dominance of the medical model and its pathological discourse. Neurological disease is referenced through the antiquated term, "the trembling withering," recuperating and reaffirming the powers of the lay person to detect and to describe disease. Likewise, the reference to the "loose boyconnell flux" in the same sentence to refer to severe diarrhea not only enacts a similar prioritizing of the colloquial but it also serves a leveling function: "trembling withers" and "loose boyconnell flux" are rhetorically placed on a par with one another, both are the province of medical practice, and, significantly, both are subject to recurrence. Indeed, the invocation earlier in the sentence of the often infamous history of medicine in the figures of the "hostels, leperyards, sweating chambers, and plaguegraves" emphasize the limits of medical expertise, the trial-and-error modalities which exemplify the transgressions of the patient's material body, the intractability of illness, and the inevitability of mortality.

As leading disability theorists such as Lennard Davis, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, and Tom Shakespeare have shown, it is the reality of the inherent vulnerability of the material body, its inevitable capitulation to death and disease, which has precipitated the frequently obsessive and occasionally violent fixation on the human body and, in particular, on singular bodies, a fixation of which the modern medical model is only one example.[49] By the turn of the twentieth

[48] This triad is the prognosis-diagnosis-treatment paradigm of the modern medical model.

[49] Without a doubt, the modern clinical medical model, as the work of disability studies scholars has shown, is the prevailing modality in the twentieth and twenty-first century for grappling with the fragility of the material body,

century, medicalized discourse, predicated upon a notion of essential lack and/or intrinsic vulnerability, galvanized a growing belief in the inherent aberrance of all living human bodies (even insofar as such aberrance exists in a potential rather than actual state), rendering embodiment virtually intolerable and thereby necessitating and authorizing medical surveillance and intervention. As a result of this "enfreakment" of the "natural" body, extraordinary bodies--those which by virtue of deformity, accident, or disease already manifest an inappropriate deviation from the normative ideal (and therefore dangerously exemplify the fallibility to which all human bodies are heir)--become not merely intolerable but unimaginable and even unspeakable. It is for this reason that even materially-minded modernists like Woolf would, at times, situate literature within a paradigm which presupposes, if not advocates, the erasure of the body: "literature does its best to maintain that its concern is with the mind; that the body is a sheet of plain glass through which the soul looks straight and clear" (qtd. in Gordon 1). Moreover, Woolf not only identifies literature with the dematerialization of the body, but asserts this process as a point of privilege within the project of literary modernity itself when she writes, "for the moderns…the point of interest lies very likely in the dark places of psychology" (qtd. in Gordon 19). This is not to suggest, however, that literary modernism and Woolf's oeuvre in particular aligns with, affirms, or perpetuates the Cartesian mind/body duality in which the first is the privileged (and, indeed, often the only recognized) term. Indeed, as will be shown in this chapter and the next, literary high modernism not only takes the Cartesian duality as a point of departure within its program of, as Bell terms it, "difficult figurality" but it also deploys experimentalist techniques in an effort to recuperate the absent and the unspeakable, restoring the missing term in the Cartesian binary by problematizing representation itself.

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but, as this chapter in particular has also shown, clinical medicine's authority has always been challenged by a myriad of counter-discourses seeking to reimagine, redefine, and re-value the body.

The vexed program of modernist experimentation, as Peter Brooks asserts in his iconic study *Body Works*, operates in response to an inherent crisis of representation at the heart of modernist art and literature (cited in Brown 12-14). Taking Gauguin's and Freud's work as emblematic of this crisis, Brooks argues that modernism's recognition of the failures of mimesis constitutes the definitive break from the Victorian and Edwardian periods, with their foundational assumptions of representationality and the orientation toward somaticization authorizing such efforts at representation. At the core of modernist experimentation as exemplified by modernist art is the interrogation of the modes of embodied being, modes which in their very nature are pluralistic, concurrent, and contradictory, rendering representation as it had been traditionally conceived and enacted impossible. In applying Brooks' studies to *Ulysses*, Richard Brown describes modernity's project of endeavoring to re/conceive of and re/present the body in a new form that

> at least since Nietzsche and since Freud, can partly be defined in terms of an attempt to think beyond the subject-object distinction….This distinction, in different ways across the different intellectual disciplines which conceive and govern the body, may be thought to tend to objectify and control and to see the body in terms of its diseases or to "pathologize" it in ways that make our modern civilisations modern but at the same time may make them uncomfortable or even potentially uninhabitable environments cultural environments for our full bodily selves. (14)

Modernism's foregrounding of this representational crisis, its situating of mimetic skepticism at the heart of its ideological program, both necessitates and authorizes the aestheticizing of representation. Indeed, in his essay, "Body Works", Brown takes Picasso's iconic *Desmoiselles d'Avignon* as a model of the crisis of embodied representation in which *Ulysses* itself is also deeply invested:

> A paradigmatic work like Picasso's 1907 *Desmoiselles d'Avignon*, with its multidiscursive array of differently figured women's bodies seems to declare that there is no longer one representation of the body but that the body may, as it were, intrude through and into the conventions of representations by insisting on the necessities of modality and of difference. (110)

The represented object is now the aesthetic object, co-opted into a paradigm of artistic experimentation designed to illuminate the creative/representational process itself. Even more significant, the reality of embodied *difference* necessitates, compels, and authorizes this aestheticization. The intrusion of the reality of the material body into the representational paradigm requires the construction and imposition of an experimental discourse which at once absorbs, defamiliarizes, and transforms the body's unsettling corporeality. This aestheticizing process in turn exemplifies and interrogates the constructedness of both subjectification and objectification, the formation of the subject and the object, the observer and the observed, through ideologically-infused creative acts and, most especially, through the act of discourse. In continuation of his analysis of literary modernism's efforts to resist this binary structure of representations of embodiment, Brown argues that Joyce's project in *Ulysses* and, in particular, within the "Penelope" episode may "emerge as an 'ontological' project: one of *being* the body" (14) in contradistinction to Cartesian epistemologies of *knowing* the body only.

Ethics and Ethos of Otherness: Knowing, Being, and Speaking the Extraordinary Body

Within the context of the problematizing of representation in an effort to discover new modes of knowing, being, and speaking the embodied other, then, literary modernism's experimental program can best be understood as a mechanism through which the constructedness of discursive representation, and the ideological paradigms (or, as Foucault would term them,

"power/knowledge structures") which inform them can be replicated and problematized. Marian Eide asserts that the metafictional investments of literary modernism exemplify an essential ethical commitment long denied literary modernism, one in which the united acts of creation, reception, and interpretation constitute a procedure of ethical exchange in which both parties are reconstituted in the act of ethical interpretation, the endeavor to understand and to be understood from a position of fundamental difference (4).

While the efforts of these scholars to approach literary modernism through the lens of ethics provide promising and profitable new insights into canonical modernist texts, relatively little attention has been given to the implications of modernist experimentation in the representation of bodies defined by their fundamental difference. The aestheticizing of representation in literary modernism takes on an important resonance, however, when directed toward the gross materiality of extraordinary bodies, adding new valences to the metafictional program insofar as the discursive orientations of modernist experimentation simultaneously echo and investigate the appropriating forces of medicalized discourse. Thus, literary modernism occupies an uneasy liminal position within the context of medicalized modernity in that it at once may be seen to constitute a problematization of the discursive paradigms seeking to construct and maintain modern identity paradigms through processes of normalization and pathologization. Simultaneously, however, and insofar as literary modernism seeks to reify the embodied subject through aesthetic (experimental) discourse, it activates the same estrangement from the material realities and subjective experience of the body as does the medical discourse it interrogates.

Perhaps no modernist work better exemplifies this tension between the manifestation and the erasure of the material body than *Ulysses*. Joyce famously declared his high modernist masterpiece to be an "epic of the cycles of the human body" (qtd. in Brown 11) and the

ascendance of body studies in late twentieth and early twenty-first century criticism has inspired voluminous writings on the novel's representations of embodiment. Indeed, literary theorists, and especially those working within the context of disability studies, have begun to note the remarkable numbers of disabled characters which populate the text, particularly (and not coincidentally) at its margins.

Despite the immense critical attention that has been paid to representations of embodiment in general and disabled embodiment in particular in this novel, however, relatively little focus has been placed on the implications of the novel's aesthetic/experimental investments in regard to the representation of the grossly material body. Nevertheless, a closer look at the novel's application of experimental discourse to its extraordinarily embodied characters constitutes an important project within this work of highlighting, questioning, and challenging medicalized modernity's appropriation of the corporeal body into language even as it perpetrates a similar cooptation in the absence of viable alternatives. As Cormier argues, Joyce's own struggles with visual impairment and the physical illnesses which would at times leave him bedbound rendered him acutely sensitive both to the vulnerabilities of the material body and to the subsuming of that body into the language of pathology (204). Insofar as *Ulysses*, then, can be articulated as an epic of the body, its author joins a chorus of modernist voices, from Woolf to Lewis, calling for a new language of the body. Nevertheless, the extraordinarily embodied characters which circle the periphery of Joyce's text attest to the impossibility of articulating the body in that representation, whether through the pathologizing paradigms of medical discourse or the aestheticizing forms of experimental discourse. Thus, the experimental techniques of literary modernism echo the dangers of medical discourse itself, a discourse which substitutes he sign for the signifier: the word for the character; the pathology for the patient. Van Boheemen-

Saaf describes the "Penelope" episode as the moment in which the text finally and absolutely "favors style over message, textuality and code over a referent, the sign over the body" (42), replacing the material presence with the immaterial word.

The challenge of representation within literary modernism, particularly in its efforts to discover new modes of speaking the body, however, is to differentiate its program from the clinical discourse of medicalized modernity which it so closely parallels. Indeed, in *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault situates the clinical encounter within a complex interdynamic of seeing and speaking: "[C]linical experience represents a moment of balance between speech and spectacle. A precarious balance, for it rests on a formidable postulate: that all that is *visible* is *expressible*, and that it is *wholly visible* because it is *wholly expressible*" (115). The connection Foucault draws here between recognition (visibility) and representation (expressibility) is crucial to the project of literary modernism insofar as the clinical encounter itself monopolizes and mediates the capacity to see and to speak. Foucault writes,

> One now sees the visible only because one knows the language; things are offered to him who has penetrated the closed world of words….Description, in clinical medicine, does not mean placing the hidden or the invisible within the reach of those who have no direct access to them; what it means is to give speech to that which everyone sees without seeing—a speech that can be understood only by those initiated into true speech. (Ibid.)

In Foucault's formulation, the clinical encounter institutes an interdynamic of sight/speech that is in itself a totality, constituting (by speaking) the subject/object in the instant of clinical recognition. Within this paradigm, there is no remainder, no excess which can be reconstituted through discursive experimentation outside of the clinical encounter: what is seen is (clinically) spoken; what is not (clinically) spoken cannot be seen, and what is neither spoken nor seen in medicalized modernity does not exist. Thus, within this framework, those uninitiated into the

discourse of "true speech" are rendered both mute and blind until the language of the clinic intervenes to discursively construct the subject and thereby to call it into existence.

At the heart of such a program, then, is the lack which Brooks and others have located within literary modernism's crisis of representation. This lack is, fundamentally, a discursive void encircling the perimeters of medicalized modernity which forbids the recognition and representation of the material body without recourse to the language of normativity and pathology insofar as it is this pathologizing language with enables, authorizes, and compels the construction of the material body in the first place. In *Joyce, Derrida, Lacan, and the Trauma of History*, van Boheemen-Saaf situates the process of transmuting the signified into the signified within the colonial context, arguing that Joyce's oeuvre as a whole and *Ulysses* in particular articulates the scene of colonial trauma. For van Boheemen-Saaf, the novel represents the endeavor to express, discharge, and compensate for this fundamental lack that lies at the heart of the colonial process, a process which in itself relies upon the construction of pathologized "colonial" bodies. She writes:

> [Joyce's] projection of a traumatized discursivity encapsulating the life-in-death of Irish experience, his syncretic manner of representation, his paradoxical approach to Irish nationalism, his complex attitude to language and cultural memory anticipate insights which we are only beginning to grasp at the end of the century. Joyce, an Irish Catholic born in 1882, grappled with the realities of colonial experience and the hegemony of the English language; and this struggle entailed an engagement with the evaporation of the presence of the material, and the devaluation or dissolution of art and truth….Joyce's encrypting of the experience of destitution in the material location of his text opens up a new, intersubjective realm of communication which may help to make it possible to work out the heritage of the past and transform the ghostly uncanniness of the "death instinct" into full discourse. (1)

As Irish-born subjects of the British crown, Stephen and Bloom, like their creator, suffer the traumas of colonial history which would compel them to manifest in the language of the

oppressor an oppression that defies signification insofar as the representation of colonial dominance requires an articulation of a (politically) embodied experience in a language repudiated and erased by the discourse of the master. The result is the endeavor to articulate the void upon which the othering of the colonized body is predicated and by which it is authorized. For van Boheemen-Saaf, then, the experimentation which lies at the heart of *Ulysses* is an articulation of an unspeakable and inarticulate trauma, an effort to speak of a politicized embodiment which can know itself neither in sign nor substance as a result of the politics of erasure upon which colonized subjectification and domination are built.

A Queer Idea: The Transcendental Blind Stripling and the Language of Blindness

Van Boheemen-Saaf's insights on colonialism are useful within the context of this study insofar as the colonized body links in many respects with the disabled body through the programmatics of othering. As Cormier notes, Joyce maintains both a colonial and a disability consciousness in his sensitivity to the politicized processes whereby material bodies are inscribed, constructed, and contained for the purposes of building and/or maintaining power/knowledge structures (204). Within this framework, then, the disabled bodies which populate the peripheries of Joyce's text may be seen both to reflect and to comment upon the colonial regime increasingly scrutinized and resisted in Ireland at the moment of the text's publication. For Cormier, the "transcendental blind stripling" constitutes an especially potent example of the critical function of the extraordinarily embodied other. While, as Cormier notes, the equating of blindness with exceptional insight or even "second sight" is centuries old, a longstanding cliché by Joyce's era, blindness holds an innovative position in Joyce's text in so far as it situates the stripling outside of the economies of the colonial gaze (209-210). The

stripling cannot participate in the visual indoctrinations of the colonial enterprise. The visible proofs of British colonial power that populate turn-of-the-century Dublin (the thoroughfares, the shops showcasing wares from every corner of the British Empire, and above all the monuments) have no impact on the stripling. Indeed, Bloom's meditations on the stripling's perceptions suggest the possibility of an extraordinary, if not potentially subversive, consciousness in the stripling's non-normative modes of perception:

> See things in their foreheads perhaps: kind of sense volume….Wonder would he feel it if something was removed. Feel a gap. Queer idea of Dublin he must have, tapping his way round by the stones. Could he walk in a beeline if he hadn't that cane? (152)

Bloom's musings on the stripling's experience imaginatively transform both the city and the stripling himself into phantasmagoric entities: the city is metamorphosed into a fantastical place, populated by the stones that serve at once as obstacle, threat, and navigational tool. Likewise, the stripling is also changed in Bloom's imagination, becoming simultaneously more and other than human: he is at once a cyclopean monster, with his vision in his forehead, and an industrious insect, capable of achieving extraordinary feats of navigation through the superhuman powers of his body. This apotheosis of bodily power, however, manifests itself only once the accoutrements of civilization—the cobblestones of the Dublin street and the cane used to enable the stripling to negotiate them—are removed. In Bloom's imagination, the stripling's powers can be unleashed because his extraordinary embodiment has already situated beyond the trappings of Irish national culture and the medicalization upon which modernity rests.

Such romanticized notions of the subjective experience of extraordinary embodiment do more than potentially subvert prevailing perceptions of both the city and of the embodied subjects which inhabit it. For Bloom, the stripling activates a recognition and questioning of the

objectification of the subject, of the constitution of the self through the awareness of oneself as object. This is particularly important within the context of van Bohemeen-Saaf's and Cormier's analyses of the text as an interrogation and critique of the colonial enterprise. The stripling in his blindness operates outside of the reciprocal and mutually interdependent mechanisms of the colonial gaze which, as Foucault argues in his doctrine of discipline through self-surveillance, depends as much on the subject's awareness of and response to himself as object as it does on the presence of any outside force objectifying the subject.

Always already doubly othered by his disability and his Irishness, the stripling matriculates through the streets of Dublin unencumbered by sight, deconstructing the materialist discourses upon which the colonial enterprise operates and replacing them with highly individualized and intensely subjective constructs of material reality. That the stripling enjoys this capacity to resist and revise hegemonic discourse and its operations through the subjectification and objectification of the colonial other is evident in Bloom's reactions immediately after leaving the stripling. As Bloom begins to imagine sexual intercourse without the sense of sight, his thoughts quickly transition from the question of perceiving one's sexual partner to the question of perceiving oneself. In the process, he begins to explore the feeling of his body beneath his hands, as the blind might explore a book in Braille: "Walking by Doran's publichouse he slid his hand between his waistcoat and trousers and, pulling aside his shirt gently, felt a slack fold of his belly. But I know it's whitey yellow. Want to try in the dark to see" (153).

It is significant, however, that Bloom's efforts to understand and to place himself in the position of the stripling immediately compel him to revert back to the position of sightedness and to the validation of empirical truth through the affirmation of sightedness: "I *know* it's whitey

yellow." Lennard Davis argues that this process of imaginatively positioning oneself within the context of disability in fact reaffirms normative paradigms, rather than undermining them:

> The average person imagines what it would be like to be blind, deaf, or lame by the simple act of closing one's eyes, stopping one's ears, or walking with a limp. After a few seconds of this deprivation, one generally rushes back to the comfort of "normality". This process creates in reality not understanding, but an "us-them division" which also neatly reinforces the hegemonic demands that one be "normal." (*J'Accuse!* 36)

It is no coincidence that immediately following this moment of empathetic understanding that Bloom returns to the paternalistic discourse with which the scene began:

> Poor fellow! Quite a boy. Terrible. Really terrible. What dreams would he have, not seeing? Life a dream for him. Where is the justice in being born that way? All those women and children excursion beanfest burned and drowned in New York. Holocaust. Karma they call that transmigration for sins you did in a past life the reincarnation met him pike hoses. Dear, dear, dear. Pity, of course: but somehow you can't cotton on to them someway. (Ibid.)

Bloom's panicked reaction to this moment of empathic understanding rehearses both ancient and contemporary discourses of the extraordinary body until an ultimate affirmation of normativity is achieved through the disavowal of the blind other. Bloom transitions swiftly from pity, to moralistic blame and retribution, to an economy of cost/benefit rationalization that gestures toward eugenics: why must the "desirable" children and women (in whom the perpetuation of more "desirables" rests) die so tragically, when this pitiful one for whom life is merely a dream continues to endure?

Thus, the stripling's presence at the periphery of the text certainly seems to provide the context for alternative modes of perception and representation, a possibility for the construction of a critical consciousness which may stand in opposition to the hegemonic discourses of

medicalized modernity and imperialism. Nevertheless, critical analysis of the stripling and of the novel's other extraordinarily embodied characters expresses a triumphalism that perpetuates long-standing essentialist paradigms of the disabled body as the occasion for and instrument of moral revelation and reclamation. Moreover, this revisionist reading of the novel's disabled characters is unsupported by the text itself, which presents a far more complex and nuanced portrait of extraordinary embodiment. Cormier's analysis echoes Eide's argument that Joyce's aesthetic project is fundamentally ethical, deriving from an ethos of difference, which Levinas would later situate in the inherent particularity of the other, is preserved with full recognition of its incommensurability and incomprehensibility. Within this framework, as has been suggested earlier in this chapter, the process of recognizing the other in its fundamental difference activates an ethical evolution in the subject confronting this difference, leaving both subjects—the self and its "other"—forever altered.

Such readings of the novel's disabled figures from the perspectives of both ethics and colonial resistance offer profitable insights into the potentiality of extraordinary embodiments as loci of change, of the "monstrous" subject as change agent. Nevertheless, such readings fail to fully account for the complicated ideological and discursive webs in which aberrant bodies are constructed and compelled to function (or not). Critics have frequently interpreted Bloom's reaction to the blind stripling as he assists him across the busy Dublin street as indicative of both Bloom's desire for a lost paternity and as the falling back into traditional paternalistic discourses in the absence of viable alternatives. Underlying these readings is an assumption of the benignity of Bloom's responses that are not borne out by the text insofar as Bloom's stance toward the stripling perpetuates and leaves unproblematized turn-of-the-century paradigms of disability.

Bloom's "lost paternity" as it is enacted in a moment of nurturing for the stripling co-opts the man into the role of surrogate for the son Bloom has lost, the stripling's aberrant body both prompting and authorizing a display of care that is simultaneously paternal and paternalistic. Inasmuch as the stripling is without an individual identity,[50] his body becomes rife for the type of substitution Bloom achieves here, discharging the performance of a fatherly obligation to care, to guide, and to protect through the now instrumentalized body of the stripling. Thus, the stripling, insofar as he is made to act as surrogate for the lost son, performs a long-standing function of the disabled body as the locus of the wish-fulfillment of the "normate," the "normal" subject and as the occasion for the display of the normate's moral virtue.

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the alternative realities envisioned by Bloom are his own. The text offers no insight into the stripling's manner of perceiving Dublin; in a novel informed by the free-floating narrative voice slipping into and out of its primary and tangential characters like a mist, the doors to the stripling's consciousness are locked. In the presence of this inscrutable otherness, Bloom inserts his own narrative of alterity, drawing, not coincidentally, upon familiar tropes of disability, paradigms which range from infantilization and exoticism to hyper-sexualization and perversity. At the root of this discursive network, however, is a pathologization that leads, ultimately, to a disavowal of the other linked to the construction and the affirmation of the self. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the stripling himself does not speak at all in this scene, nor is it by chance that the stripling receives aid that he never solicited. The same paradigms which lead Bloom to assume the stripling's need, borne of medicalized modernity's rhetoric of the intrinsic lack of all bodies[51] and, in particular, of always already

[50] It is significant that Bloom doesn't wonder what the stripling's name is but *if* he has a name.

[51] The rhetoric of intrinsic lack derives from the premise of the vulnerability of material bodies to death and disease, a premise upon which the ascendance of the modern medical model is based and from which it derives its power. The material body, as vulnerable object, requires and authorizes continuous monitoring and regulation

pathological (disabled) bodies, presupposes the stripling's sense of such a need, his desire for intercession, and his gratitude for this ultimate act of benevolence. Within this context, the stripling's silence is both expected and authorized: both men follow a script of disability, as is evident in Bloom's profound sensitivity to his own speech when approaching the stripling: "Say something to him. Better not do the condescending. They mistrust what you tell them. Pass a common remark" (151). Bloom's assertion of the stripling's mistrust of language simultaneously suggests the possible existence of an alternative discourse which would speak to the stripling's "[q]ueer idea(s)," even as the stripling's ultimate silence affirms the absence of any place for such a discourse within this script of disability.

Despite Bloom's flight into these traditional representational modes, it would be inappropriate to cast Bloom's actions in a wholly uncharitable light, to characterize Bloom as opportunistic or exploitative. Rather, the exchange between Bloom and the stripling exemplifies the highly complex, subtle, and potent discursive regimes in which all bodies are bound. That Bloom should fall back into the language of paternalistic care in the absence of viable alternatives is significant here in as much as this language shapes both perception and response. While the prodigiously named Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdell Farrell navigates the Dublin thoroughfares with more difficulty and danger than the stripling could ever imagine, the normative nature of his body situates him within the purview of eccentric (but self-reliant) individuality, rather than the realm of need and of care that is the stripling's habitus.

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through the modalities of clinical medicine. As an intercessory agent, clinical medicine is engaged a continuous process of remediating or managing the body's vulnerabilities, identifying existing or potential deviations from an idealized state of completeness (i.e. total health and optimal functioning). In the era of modern prenatal testing, as Rayna Rapp and others have shown, this project of clinical intervention can now begin prior to birth and continue on until death.

"She Could Call Herself His Little Wife to Be": The Well-Turned Ankle of Gerty MacDowell

Discourses of disability, and particularly those pertaining to sexuality, also play out in important ways in the encounter in the Nausicaa episode between Bloom and Gerty MacDowell. While many critics have dismissed Gerty as an emblem of a frivolous female consumerism, Angela Lea Nemecek finds in Gerty a powerful critic of normative modernity and the gender norms and medico-scientific regimes which undergird it (177). For Nemecek, the reality that Gerty is both disabled *and* a woman is potent and instructive insofar as Gerty's disability situates her outside of the auspices of normative femininity, providing a unique and privileged position from which to critique the social structures (of faith, law, and family) upon which gender hierarchies are based. Nemecek finds in Gerty's stance on female priests, the prosecution of abusive husbands, and the institution of marriage without reproduction a revolutionary agenda that would have been impossible had Gerty not been situated, by virtue of her disability, outside of normative "female" economies of marriage and reproduction. Additionally, Nemecek finds more substantive proof of Gerty's disability-inspired revolutionary consciousness in Gerty's dreams of a marriage without children and in her masturbatory encounter with Bloom.

Like Cormier's celebratory reading of the function of the stripling within the text, Nemecek's insights into Gerty's role are profitable but incomplete in that they discount or misread both the material reality of Gerty's extraordinary embodiment and their implication for a woman in early twentieth century Dublin. Nemecek argues that not only does Gerty deploy her physical attributes to entice Bloom but that her primary instrument of seduction is the very locus of her fundamental difference—her crippled leg (180). Nemecek is correct insofar as Gerty's leg—its strategic presentation and rhythmic movements—functions more than any other part of

her body to arouse Bloom. Nevertheless, Gerty's presentation of her disabled leg is a purposeful masquerade, designed to persuade Bloom that he is seeing what he is not. The success of Gerty's efforts to arouse Bloom depends upon her capacity to erase the markers of her difference, to not simply conceal her disability but to eradicate it entirely—at least from the perspective of the observer.

It is no coincidence, then, that Gerty's long-distance seduction of Bloom would be described ultimately as a sort of "language" between them. As has been explored throughout this chapter, literary modernism is informed by the commitment to the substitution of the signifier for the sign, particularly in the recognition of the eternal absence of the sign. Representation, therefore, serves to articulate an intrinsic void in order both to comprehend and to tame it. The "language" formed in the encounter between Bloom and Gerty is the paradoxical expression and the concealment of Gerty's lost "wholeness," the loss of the "normate" self in her accident on the hill. Of Gerty, Joyce writes,

> [O]fttimes the beauty of poetry, so sad in its transient loveliness, had misted her eyes with silent tears for she felt that the years were slipping by for her, one by one, and but for that one shortcoming she knew she need fear no competition and that was an accident coming down Dalkey hill and she always tried to conceal it. (308)

Significantly, for Gerty, the language of bodily concealment is couched in and aligned with the transient beauty of poetry, a beauty which is as ephemeral as Gerty's waning loveliness, a loveliness which is itself always already insufficient to atone or compensate for the material lack of her body. Thus, the "language" that she and Bloom create in their encounter is constructed through the *absence* of the body of the desired other, by the contact of the material with imaginative, the desiring self and the fictive ideal. Their language is subsequently shattered in the moment of the assertion of the material body: the enchantment is broken when Gerty stands

to walk away and Bloom recognizes for the first time that she is disabled. Almost instantly, Bloom expresses gratitude that he had not known of her lameness moments before, because such knowledge would have made desire and consummation perverse, if not impossible:

> Mr. Bloom watched her as she limped away. Poor girl! That's why she's left on the shelf and the others did a sprint. Thought something was wrong by the cut of her jib. Jilted beauty. A defect is ten times worse in a woman. But makes them polite. Glad I didn't know it when she was on show. Hot little devil all the same. I wouldn't mind. Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses. (311)

Once again, Bloom situates his encounter with the other within the traditional discourse of pity ("Poor girl!") and loss ("Jilted beauty") before ultimately locating desire for and consummation with this other in the arena of perversity and "abnormality," subsuming Gerty beneath an homogenizing rubric of untouchability: to liaise with Gerty is to breach the boundaries of bodily integrity, a simultaneously thrilling and shameful mutual defilement through transgression, the appropriation of that which has been set apart.

Gerty's departure is quickly followed by Bloom's attempt to leave her a message in the sand, which Bloom immediately abandons as the waves sweep in to wash away the text: "Mr. Bloom with his stick gently vexed the thick sand at his foot. Write a message for her. Might remain. What? I…. Useless. Washed away….Bend, see my face there, dark mirror, breathe on it, stirs" (320). This failure of articulation beyond the physical encounter between Bloom and Gerty is instructive for a number of reasons. Just as the text is closed to any articulation of the stripling's subjectivity beyond the traditional, pathologizing discourses of disability, Bloom's inability to complete his message to Gerty, the inevitable erasure of his text by the inexorable sea, serves a twofold function here. First, the scene exemplifies the ineradicable but inarticulate presence of the material, the waves erasing Bloom's text echoing the materiality of Gerty's

aberrant body, an aberrant materiality precluding communication and understanding. When Bloom endeavors to locate a discourse capable of enabling communication with Gerty, the ineradicable other, it is, ultimately, only himself that he finds. That the first and only words Bloom writes are "I. AM. A." (Ibid.) is significant insofar as this message reveals the recursivity of the discourse of the disability in which both Bloom and Gerty are entangled. Bloom's efforts to define, construct, or articulate a language of difference are ultimately frustrated by the resurrection and reaffirmation of the discursive constructs through and into which he was born: instead of catalyzing the emergence of a new discourse of otherness, Bloom finds in his encounter with Gerty only the return and restoration of his own image, of the discursive "I"/eye through which the construction of his own normative subjectivity is affirmed and perpetuated.

This important scene also suggests the mutual exclusivity of matter and discourse: the body that can be articulated is a fictive body, just as the material body is one which defies, eludes, and denies discourse. Gerty and Bloom are able to "communicate" only for as long as her body could maintain its position as idealized fiction, but when the material reality of the body "intervenes," to borrow Woolf's term, inarticulation rolls in like the tide sweeping away Bloom's letters. Thus, the elements of Gerty's character that Nemecek reads as triumphantly feminist—Gerty's self-pleasuring and her dreams of a happy marriage without children—in fact serve only to further illustrate these twin principles of discourse and materiality in as much as the materiality of Gerty's body--its deviation from the norm--situates her outside of the traditional marriage plot. Discursively rendered pathological, and therefore not marriageable, because of her disability, her recourse is a flight of narrative fancy, as she seeks solace in the fairy tale romances that are incompatible the material realities of her body. Gerty's self-pleasuring is not an assertion of sexual freedom but rather is emblematic of her unassailable difference. The

reality of her material body creates a gulf between her and others that is unbreachable, one which can be bridged only in the idealized fiction of a phantasmagoric husband and with her own body functioning as surrogate. Likewise, Gerty's dreams of a marriage without children may well represent the intrusion of the material into this fantasy world: Gerty's disability may have left her physically unable to bear children, a reality of her material body echoed in the masturbatory encounter with Bloom--sex without the possibility of reproduction. Gerty's apparently obsessive but ultimately vain efforts to mask her disability by deploying all the attributes of feminine consumer culture cannot eradicate the material fact of her impairment and, in particular, of the prospective barrenness which would place her irrevocably outside of the economy of marriage.

While, as Nemecek notes, critics have dismissed Gerty as a silly and superficial victim of consumer culture, Gerty's participation in consumer culture signifies far more than any vanity. Petra Rau has argued that the rise of the modern commodity culture derives from the establishment of a premise of physical insufficiency, defectiveness, and lack (126). Into this arena of paradigmatic or discursive disablement, mass-produced consumer goods are positioned as correctives. Such consumer goods operate along two trajectories, particularly for the female consumer. The first derive from a mimetic function, enabling the body to emulate the idealized form of the normate: cosmetics and fashionable attire are deployed to facilitate the consumer in approximating an "idealized normativity," a fiction of mandatory ("normal") female embodiment. The second, galvanized by the emerging medical commodities markets, proposes to remediate malfunctioning bodies through pharmacological intervention: the pills, potions, and devices of medical modernity promise to rehabilitate intrinsically defective bodies through the potent powers of scientific expertise. The "proper" citizen, then, harnesses these twin forces of

the medico-scientific regime—the performative and the functional/corrective—in an ongoing and highly public process of constructing the normate body.

The public nature of this construction is significant insofar as physical health in medicalized modernity is appropriated under the auspices of the public good. For all her posturing in regard to both the "naturalness" of her blooming beauty and the private adornments not intended for public consumption (the ribbons of her undergarments, the strategic selection of her hosiery and garters), Gerty's investments in the construction of her embodied appearance are highly commodified and intensely public. She telegraphs the signs of her participation in both consumer and medical commodity culture as a display of appropriate female citizenship, a modern identity that equates social and familial integrity with the maintenance and/or the restoration of physical health. In the embodied subject, the public and the private meet, with the construction of the modern subject profoundly implicated in an economy of a fetishized normativity predicated upon an essential corporeal lack. Such medicalized constructions of the modern body are premised upon the assumption that the innately fallible material body is (or should be) always already embroiled in the struggle for perfectibility even as such constructs require the recognition of the ultimate futility of such projects of perfectibility, a cognizance that ensures continuous participation in the medico-scientific consumer culture.

As a disabled woman, then, Gerty maintains an uneasy and unique position within this culture insofar as the paradigms of deficiency upon which consumption depends hold a unique valence in regard to her physical embodiment. The materiality of her injury, manifested in the limp that is not revealed to Bloom until after their long-distance sexual encounter and which profoundly alters his perception of her, rendering future desire perverse, doubly removes her from the premise of perfectibility driving consumer culture. Even if the idealized body of the

normate is an essential fiction, the performative and corrective functions of medicalized consumerism enable the consumer for a time to mimic this idealized embodiment, painting on the rosy cheeks of good health, spraying on the lustrous shine of well-nourished skin and hair, drinking down the elixirs of the energy that the body in its unsupported state lacks. The mimetic imperative of idealized normativity is necessarily an ephemeral one: all bodies will fall short; all embodied subjects will at some point in their lives fail in their performance of unimpeachable health and bodily functionality. However, for Gerty, as for the blind stripling, such performances are necessarily interrupted at every turn by the gross intrusion of the body, telegraphing the truth of embodied fragility that medicalized modernity demands to be concealed.

The frivolity for which critics have condemned Gerty, the near-obsessive preening and the rampant consumption from which her familial background (an alcoholic and abusive father, an absent mother) and class status would seem to disqualify her, serves as a sort of reaction-formation, the attempts to over-compensate for the failure of her material body to participate appropriately in medicalized modernity and its consumer culture. The body's insistence on the signs of its difference and deficiency, despite Gerty's conspicuous consumption, renders her dangerous and inassimilable. Indeed, Joyce characterizes Gerty with a mock-romantic tone that would situate her as the fairest of the fair, save for the one fatal and tragic flaw. The dreams of romance which preoccupy Gerty similarly attest to the sublimation of the romantic ideal in her worldview, an ideal which both accepts and transforms the reality of her material body in that Gerty's ideal of married love is both transcendent and earthly: her dreams of an heroic, rapturous love echo the fairy tales and sensational romances marketed toward young girls and women, once again situating Gerty within the economy of consumer culture, but the reality of her Prince Charming is a concession to the reality of her material embodiment. Her Prince Charming is an

elderly gentleman with a storied past, a forgiving heart, and a worldly-wise nature, because only he will be able to understand and embrace the one deficiency, to recognize the beauty amid and inside dangerous and disappointing materiality. Only one who is himself situated through age and encroaching mortality outside of the reproductive economy of young marriage could play prince to this wrecked and ruined princess.

It is no coincidence, then, that Gerty's internal world reads like a skewed romance novel, playing on the familiar tropes of transporting and tragic love, in the (unsuccessful) attempt to offer a new discourse of embodiment. Gerty's dreams of marriage, as has been explored, offer a subversive paradigm of desire and sexuality outside of the purview of reproduction and situated in agents not amenable to the normative ideal—the aged and the disabled. Nevertheless, despite the richness of Gerty's imaginative life and its capacity to interrogate and revise the normative ideal of medicalized modernity, Gerty's fantasies remain simply that—fantastic—played out in fleeting moments as in the purchasing of a new hat, the strategic adornment of her wondrous hair, the wordless seduction of a distant stranger. Such moments, however, are quickly displaced by the intervention and insistence of the body, retroactively undermining the discursive exchange Gerty had attempted to enact: the hat, the hair, the seduction lose their initial meaning in the recognition of a fundamental physical difference, the extraordinariness of Gerty's body, (re)incorporates her body into the discourse of disability and makes a perversion of what had come before.

The Unsinkable Molly Bloom: From Spectacle to Speech

While Gerty's embodied difference both disenfranchises her from the economies of idealized normativity upon which medical modernity is based and precludes the construction of

alternative discourses of being, Molly Bloom offers a fascinating, if not wholly revisionist or corrective, mode of being in and speaking about the body. Joyce has famously identified the "Penelope" as the "clou" of the text and the ascendance of body studies in the late twentieth century has occasioned immense focus on this all-importance episode. Critics have variously read Penelope as the ur-text for the *ecriture feminine*, a primordial manifestation of the jouissance of writing *from* the body in subversion of the Word of the Father and the laws of patriarchal discourse. In his essay, "Body Words," Brown argues that

> This body provides not only pleasure and meaning but also a determination to "disintellectualize writing" in order to articulate the body, reclaim the writing of the body from patriarchy and both embrace and exploit the identification of women and body as a means writing back through and with the body in practices of Cixousian *ecriture.* (113)

Likewise, in *Deviant Modernisms,* Colleen Lamos situates Molly's program of writing from the body firmly within the errors and errata for which the text is infamous:

> While other characters make mistakes, Molly inhabits error; whereas Stephen's and Bloom's slips simply indicate human epistemological frailty, Molly's monologue is, according to Phillip Herring, "a tapestry of contradictions" in which error and truth promiscuously mingle. Previously dismissed as "formless" and "without style," "Penelope" has since been celebrated by some feminist critics as the conclusive statement of indeterminacy in *Ulysses*. Molly's peculiar position on the margin of the text yet also as its culmination…both places her outside its economy of righting/writing and calls upon her affirmative endorsement of it. (121)

Alternatively, "Penelope" has been condemned as reductive and essentializing, the perpetuation of tropes of the female as pure body, in contradistinction to the logos of the dematerialized male.

Of significance to this chapter, however, are the complex position of Molly's discourse both within and outside of emerging discourses of the body and the extent to which her

monologue simultaneously participates in (and therefore seems to affirm) medicalized modernity's means of speaking the body, even as it problematizes, undermines, and counters such discourses. Feminist disability scholars have long recognized the connections between disability and feminism, in that the equating of female and disabled bodies extends as far back as Aristotle, who famously declared the female body "monstrous" insofar as it deviates from the male norm. Within this context, then, Molly's discourse of the body can be seen to participate in a program of elucidating otherness, of articulating a material reality always already beyond the pale of patriarchy and outside of systems of phallogocentric modernity. In terms of race, gender, and religious affiliation (at least through marriage, though Molly herself is, apparently, a non-practicing Catholic) Molly is firmly situated outside of the discourses of normativity, representing a radical and multiple otherness. An Irish woman married to an Irish Jew, she embodies a nexus of subversive positionalities operating on both the ideological (discursive) and physiological (material) planes.

Within the context of Molly's multiple "othering," the illustrious Penelope monologue takes on particular resonance. If *Ulysses* is, as Joyce notes, an "epic of the cycles of the body" (qtd. in Brown 11), and if Penelope functions as the "clou" of the text, then this final episode may be seen both to join and to illuminate the preceding text. Situated outside of the narrative itself and positioned almost as an addendum to the proper text, the Penelope monologue hearkens to the function of the Chorus in Classical drama, commenting upon preceding events in a manner that lends meaning to or problematizes the understanding of what has come before. Further, as Brown notes in his explication of the Penelope episode, in its linkage with the flesh of the body, Penelope operates outside of and yet as an essential facet of the text, much like the flesh of the body itself:

> It (flesh) is not…a part usually understood to be governed or governable by conventional medical discourses. The "flesh" suggests the body in general, as defined by its libidinality and mortality. In that it may be thought to be as much a part of the cultural as of the medical sphere, the place where law, language, and the body meet, and moreover be thought to be the part that is, as it were, the material ground of all the rest. ("Body Words" 114)

The trajectory of the principal narrative (i.e. the 17 episodes preceding Penelope) does indeed seem to present an epic of the body insofar as pivotal moments of embodied experience are problematized within the text. As Brown argues in "Body Words," the novel's episodic, non-linear structure suggests an iconography of the discrete body parts which simultaneously seeks to reimagine the body as a cohesive system and to undermine such medicalized schemas which would subsume each part to the functioning of the whole (114). At the same time as the text explodes linearity and subordinates the whole to the autonomy of its parts, however, the text as a unit succeeds in tracing a path from the emergence of embodied materiality to the emergence of a discourse of the body: the novel begins at Martello Tower, described as the omphalos, where pagan and Christian rituals of rebirth collide in Mulligan's mockery of the Communion rite and in the appearance of the milk woman, embodying the ancient Celtic mythos of the crone who is both the bringer of life (symbolized by the milk she brings) and harbinger and exemplar of its destruction (as represented in the visible decay of her aging body). Such themes are played out again and again in the text, as in the graphic representations of the decomposition of Dignham's corpse in the Hades episode and in the reminders which emerge time and again throughout the text of Mina Purefoy's agony as she lies in her third day (suggestive of death and resurrection) of labor.

Thus, in a novel which seeks to present an epic of the body and to depict its component parts as equal to or greater than their sum, the material reality of the physical body is an

omnipresent fact. The body in need and in peril haunts the text: visibly disabled bodies (Gerty's limp, the stripling's cane, the veteran's missing arm) emerge at unexpected and unsettling moments from the amorphous and anonymous crowds of urban Dublin. Likewise, Bloom's desiring body propels him beyond any rational volition, driving him to eat, defecate, and masturbate in acquiescence to the demands of his embodied materiality. This reality is echoed in Stephen's famous "ineluctable modalities of the visible" (35), in which material embodiment is aligned with intelligible signification and, above all, with the appropriate reading of embodied signs:

> ineluctable modalities of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: colored signs. Limits of the diaphne. But, he adds, in bodies. Then he was aware of them bodies before of them colored. How? By knocking his sconce against them, sure. (Ibid.)

This acknowledgment of the gross materiality of bodies inspires Stephen to close his eyes as he walks along the shore (foreshadowing the stripling) in an effort to simultaneously "blind" himself to such materiality (and to deny the materiality of his own body) even as it compels a more stark awareness of the condition of his own body, the feel of the sand beneath his feet and the sensation of the sun and the wind on his skin, which he uses to guide him forward without the benefit of sight. All the while, the phenomenological experience of the material body is infused with constant reminders of its finitude, the births and deaths which function as a motif and a refrain throughout the text (even as Stephen prepares for the new day at the omphalos of the world, he is haunted by the ghost of his dead mother; the promise that Milly's emerging womanhood brings to Bloom is tempered by the reality of Rudy's death and the extinction of the Bloom family name).

Molly's monologue in Penelope, then, attains particular resonance as the lynchpin episode of a novel centered upon the realities of the material body, that paradoxical organism so feared and so desired. Particularly for those theorists which view Molly's monologue as an early exemplar of *l'ecriture feminine*, the Penelope episode is valorized as the explosion of patriarchal discourse, the eradication of the Law of the Father. This is true insofar as Molly's monologue glories in an idiosyncratic and iconoclastic discourse of the body and, in particular, of the personal *female* body. At the same time, however, as Ellman argues, Molly's monologue must not be understood as the representation of a physical body—there is no effort to mimetically reproduce material embodiment. Rather, Molly's monologue signifies the transmutation of the material body into discourse. Ellman writes:

> And far from saying yes to the flesh, her monologue revolves around the theme of disembodiment, particularly in the form of shedding skins….Joyce's comments on "Penelope" have sent his critics on a wild goose chase for the flesh, obscuring the episode's preoccupation with the word, particularly as an agent of disenfleshment. (98)

Moreover, the word not only functions as an instrument of "disenfleshment" but also as the conduit for discursive self-(re)fashioning, the mode through which the continuous process of self-construction/destruction/reconstruction occurs: "Molly skins herself with words, and yet those very words provide her with a second skin, finer than the skin they cauterize" (105). It is within this context, then, that "Penelope" may be seen to operate as Joyce's "clou" in that it brings to fruition the project of the previous 17 episodes, contending with the body in order to speak it.

That it is Molly, rather than Stephen or Bloom, who ultimately achieves the embodied discourse that the preceding text seeks is significant for a number of reasons. First, the grossly material body which haunts the novel and Stephen and Bloom's consciousness, in particular, has

been gradually sloughed away by the time they return to Eccles Street. At the end of the Ithaca episode, both Stephen and Bloom are described as "astral bodies," their material bodies subsumed in the male-to-male discourse Bloom so vehemently craves. The dematerialization of the physical body enacted in the discursive exchange between Bloom and Stephen, however, differs from Molly's discourse in as much as the fraternal or, more exactly, the paternal discourse the men share functions to deny the body while Molly's discourse transforms it.

Though many theorists have celebrated the Penelope episode as an articulation of the specifically female body, others have repudiated the novel as a whole in regard to the apparent isolation and stasis of Molly's body. In a text that celebrates mobility, Molly is the only character who remains rooted in a single spot—her bedroom—throughout Bloomsday. While Bloom and Stephen emulate the flaneur in their matriculations through the city, expressing an evolving consciousness rooted in the sensory experience of the volatile city, Molly remains secure and still in her bed. Molly's physical rootedness institutes a discourse of the body distinct from that which could be articulated by the text's ambulatory figures. From Bloom and Stephen to the blind stripling circling the perimeters of the text, male embodied experience is configured through movement. In *Subaltern Ulysses,* Enda Duffy argues that Joyce's text simultaneously articulates and problematizes the development of the postmodern embodied subject, for whom consciousness is a function and a product of movement (62). Brown, drawing on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological principles of the self as an organ and articulation of sensory perception, asserts that Joyce configures the embodied self, as represented by Bloom and Stephen, as an evolving mechanism of bodies in motion, receiving, processing, and reflecting ephemeral, physical stimuli (17). Significantly, however, Bloom's and Stephen's matriculation through Dublin participates in an economy of colonial subject-formation that is, as Davies

argues, inherently masochistic insofar as this project of self-(re)formation is enacted through a process of discipline, denial, and loss, a process that various post-colonial interpretations of *Ulysses* hold is inherent to the creation of a colonial consciousness.

While Cormier notes (and refutes) the frequent associations made between disability and immobility (204), the stasis of an otherwise "normal" (although female, Irish, and Jewish by marriage) character like Molly adds a new valence to efforts to understand her, aligning her with "others" marginalized through an embodiment characterized by difficult (or absent) mobility: in other words, Molly's stasis insinuates her within the context of disability and as a result adds a new dimension to her monologue. As a static figure within the text, Molly's discourse of the body, then, will be inherently different from Bloom's and Stephen's. Davies employs Deleuze and Guattari's principles of "becoming-other" to position Molly as a corrective to Bloom's masochistic attempts at self-re/creation:

> Molly's resistance to the controls of Bloom's masochism shows us that there is always the alternative of "becoming-other" in a processual strategy beyond the reach of the controls imposed on the corporeal body, by taking a "line of flight" which is not an escape from the problems but a means of combatting it….Joyce's symptomotology opens up for us the possibility of productive change in people and society through the "full BwO" and the processes of change and "becoming other" which he has brought to our attention in his "*reembodying*" of the corporeal body of Molly in the "Penelope" episode as he moves us beyond the ritual masochism of our socially-constructed selves. In doing so he offers us that "health" that Nietzsche and Deleuze spoke of: "[h]ealth as literature, as writing, [which] consists in inventing a people who are missing. It is the task of the fabulating function to invent a people. (188)

The premise of health as a function of writing is significant within the purposes of Davies' study in that literature is invoked here as an instrument for the creation of a people who are "missing." This aligns well with the often-noted immobility of Molly's body in this otherwise highly

peripatetic text. Confined, by choice or circumstance, to her bedroom throughout the duration of the text, Molly joins the ranks of those "missing" others whom literature must restore in a discourse of fabulation as cure, of story as the agent of the return of health.

Despite the triumphalist readings many theorists have provided of Molly's discourse, however, this formulation, through which the embodied self is extracted in the process of discursive cure, merely reaffirms the paradigms of medicalized modernity which it would seek to reimagine and replace. In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault situates the rise of professionalized medicine and the modern medico-social regime upon which it is built with the systematic extraction of the patient from the clinical encounter:

> If one wishes to know the illness from which he is suffering, one must subtract the individual, with his particular qualities….at this level, the individual was merely a negative element, the accident of the disease, which, for it and it is, is most alien to its essence. (14)

Like Molly's discourse of the body, which, according to Davies, restores health to a diseased society through the discursive construction of a fully Body without Organs, the clinical encounter also invokes discourse as curative, deploying the language of restoration in the construction of missing bodies, a process enabled, activated through, and authorized by the defining, erasure, and reconstitution through medical discourse (and namely the diagnosis/prognosis/treatment triad) of, to use Judith Butler's terminology, "livable" bodies, bodies that matter. This erasure of the individual body is evident throughout Molly's illustrious monologue, as individual subjects bleed into one another until deciphering to whom or what the monologue refers becomes impossible. The celebrated profusion of pronouns in Molly's monologue, while echoing the stream of consciousness technique for which the text is famous, also exemplifies the standardization and substitution of bodies upon which medicalized

modernity is predicated. Just as the modern technocratic regime cannot function without the ultimate uniformity and fungibility of embodied subjects, so too much the diagnostic paradigm operate under a law of probabilities which insists upon collectivity, just as the litany of real and imagined lovers in Molly's imaginings lose their particularity in a discourse of essential sameness.

In addition to the extraction of individual bodies, in the specificity of their subjectivity, Molly's monologue of the body enacts a discourse of somatic "fracturing" which is simultaneously characteristic of modernist experimentation and reminiscent of the deconstruction of the embodied subject through the gaze of medical science. Brown argues that the dismantling of the physical body in modernist representation suggests an effort to interrogate and undermine Enlightenment insistence upon the functionality of the body and, in particular, industrial modernity's instrumentalizing of the embodied subject. An extended quote from Brown's "Body Words" is helpful here:

> Take, for example, the image of the unimagineably disintegrated body of the mentally unstable boy Stevie who is the first and most obvious victim of the bomb outrage in Joseph Conrad's 1907 novel *The Secret Agent*—a body whose status as enigmatic evidence, whose clues, provide a paradigm for a discourse that runs throughout the novel in which the grotesque or extreme or dramatically altering bodily states of the characters provide a symbolic language of clues to the reader in a language that is at once embedded in and attempting to reach beyond those nineteenth-century discourses of phrenology, physiognomy, and Lombrosian criminology...With its scattered eyes, ears, feet, hands, teeth, nails, hair and, above all, bones, there is also a dismembered buried body in "The Waste Land"….We might perhaps even claim, in a spirit of Bakhtinian carnival or of an epochal mirror phase that the body *is* the waste land of literary Modernism that its discourses encounter as waste but refuse to abandon as merely waste, indeed perhaps rediscover as meaning because it is a waste of parts, in the sense of these parts being uncontained by function or totality or perhaps by authority or power. (112)

Brown's formulation is significant in that the fractured body to which he refers is, principally, a *discursive* body rather than a material one. Brown defines this body as "enigmatic evidence," as "meaning," as a "symbolic language of clues." It is, in other words, a fictive body constructed of words and images, a body that is, paradoxically, speakable only insofar as it is materially unimaginable and unlivable: a linguistic rather than a fleshly body.

Thus, while Brown reads into literary modernism's fracturing of the physical body the subversion of regimes of power, regimes which would insist upon the myth of bodily wholeness, functionality, and standardization, Valérie Bénéjam argues that the fracturing of the body related in particular both to the text's representations of Molly and to Molly's monologue itself in Penelope replicates the techniques of the peep show, techniques with which Molly, as a stage performer, would be intimately aware. For Bénéjam, the deconstruction of Molly's body ensures its status as fetish in that the promise of the body's revelation is continuously invoked and yet never fulfilled, the frustration of desire ensuring the continuation of that desire:

> Molly's body is never shown or seen directly. The book ends on a kiss, the promise of some further consummation, which is never given, thus ensuring the reader's unabated desire. Indeed, the point is not to show, but to stage the showing. (74)

Significantly, the staging of Molly's body in the production of desire is inextricably bound up in the re/construction of the material body through its replacement by material and/or linguistic signs:

> From "Calypso" onwards, and mainly through the mediation of Bloom's viewpoint, one can observe a double strategy of dissimulation and replacement of Molly's body. The two main techniques used are synecdochic fragmentation and metonymic fetishism….[W]e never see Molly's whole body, only body parts, and those body parts are very often replaced by the corresponding pieces of clothing. (65)

Further, as Bénéjam notes, such techniques of fetishization lead to the substitution of the grossly material body with the symbolic/discursive one: "cut up into disconnected pieces or replaced by garments as it is, the body that we are reading about is not one that may be imagined or synthesized easily" (66), a body which, by the end of the "Ithaca" episode has "disappeared behind the abstract music of philosophical and Latinate terminology" (68).

This transmutation of the material body into the unimagineably discursive body is significant here in that such practices simultaneously echo and problematize the deconstruction of the material body and its subsequent reconstruction through discourse which characterizes the rise of professionalized medicine. Ian Hacking, in his "Our Neo-Cartesian Bodies in Parts," describes in vivid detail the fracturing of the corporeal body through medical surveillance. For Hacking, the modern medical gaze became one that "did not see *through* bodies to their humors in balance or imbalance. Instead, it began to look *at* internal organs and tissues….Illness and disease became, not a matter of the whole body, but of its parts and their pathologies" (78). This fracturing of the material body into its component parts serves a key function in medicalized modernity in as much as it simultaneously authorizes and necessitates the hegemony of the medico-social regime. The whole body, particularly when that body is always already rendered pathological through illness, injury, or deformity, is othered from itself through the medicalized breakdown of the system into its constituent parts. Molly's body, like the body of the patient, is rendered unimaginable, inconceivable, because it is never and can never be represented as a totality. The only recourse, therefore, is a reconstitution through language—whether this be through the medicalized language of the diagnostic paradigm or the language of experimental modernism. Once again, Foucault is helpful here:

> Alone the (medical) gaze dominates the entire field of possible knowledge; the intervention of techniques presenting problems of

> measurement, substance, or composition at the level of invisible structures is rejected….On the line on which the visible is ready to be resolved into the invisible, on that crest of its disappearance, singularities come into play. A discourse on the individual is once more possible, or, rather, necessary, because it is the only way in which the gaze can avoid renouncing itself, effacing itself in the figures of experience, in which it would be disarmed. The principle of visibility has its correlative in the differential reading of cases. (167-168).

Within the framework of medicalized modernity, embodied specificity born of material experience, threatens the epistemologies upon which its authority is based; the differential reading of cases, therefore, intervenes to restore and confirm the authority of the medico-social regime. Individual cases are subsumed within a collectivity of knowledge-formation for the purposes of probabilistic comparison. Most significant for the purposes of this argument, however, is the reality that such comparative projects operate through the dismantling of bodies into their component parts for the purposes of analysis and classification. Within this paradigm, knowledge rests squarely within the greater in*sight* of the medical gaze and its capacity to reveal truth through the recognition and articulation the realities obscured by the material body in its totality, rendering visible what was once invisible through the appropriate reading of embodied signs and thereby transforming the body into narrative.

Though Joyce's "epic of the body" goes far to articulate that which is largely unspeakable, the gross materiality of embodiment, the evolution of professionalized medicine in the late nineteenth century gave rise to a medico-social regime predicated upon and authorized by the discursive and ideological construction of pathological bodies. Thus, Joyce's experimental techniques, his efforts to problematize and to reimagine modernity's narratives of the body, are embroiled in frameworks which they would resist. In "speaking" the body, Joyce transmutes the corporeal into the linguistic, a process that at once illuminates, interrogates, and, ultimately,

perpetuates the economies of the discursive erasure of the material body in which modern medico-social regimes are so deeply invested and from which they derive their power.

Chapter 4:
Dis/Embodying the Community:
Combination, Connection, and the Monstrous Singularity in Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway

All day, all night, the body intervenes.
Virginia Woolf

Bodies show up in stories as dynamic entities that resist or refuse the cultural scripts assigned to them.
David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder

The Dis/Embodied Politic: Monstrous Singularity and the Limits of Community

In Bojana Kunst's study of representations of the monstrous in the Baroque era, the author argues that

> [T]he monstrous (exhibited during that period in many museums of curiosities, private collections, etc.) was not only a kind of 'entertainment' for the skeptical mind, but also a topos for the temporary visibility of connections between man and animal, human and non-human, natural and artificial….[T]his visibility of connections quickly became subject to different regimes of representation….[and] it is exactly the regulation of the monstrous—the attempt to make the monstrous invisible—which enabled the continuous production of hybridity in the scientific 'black box' as well as in political procedures. The appearance and disappearance of the monstrous, therefore, are somehow two sides of the same coin: the monstrous *theatrum mundi* was a kind of spectacular prelude to early modern science and politics. (212)

As this study has shown, the regulation of the extraordinary body, its systematic and purposeful display and disappearance, extends far beyond the early modern period, exerting a profound influence on Victorian, fin de siècle, and high modernist art, literature, and culture. Indeed, the regulation of the visibility of the monstrous so potently analyzed in Kunst's assessment of the Baroque era plays perhaps an even greater role in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as modern technocratic cultures began to emerge and the professionalized sciences began to organize, define, and assert their identity and authority, most notably through the regulation of the extraordinary "other" in its myriad forms.

The first half of this study centered upon the visibly "monstrous" body and the projection of cultural anxieties, questions, and ideological commitments onto the extraordinarily embodied in the Victorian era, exemplifying what Christopher Lawrence has described in his investigation

into the role that the rise of modern medicine played in modern British identity-formation as "a world in which discrimination and selection were based on measurement, whether it was a written *examination* for the civil service or a physical *examination* for life insurance (ch. 2). Such classificatory regimes, as Lawrence notes, were based upon a normative ideal, derived from empirical observation and statistical analysis and yoked to paradigmatic images of cultural "others" defined by class, race, gender, and other forms of "deviant" embodiment. Of paramount importance within Victorian taxonomies of the normal and the abnormal is the use of material, embodied signs as an index of both identity and cultural belonging—or the lack thereof. Consequently, both "freak shows" for the lower classes and the exhibition of "prodigies" for the elite serve comparable purposes insofar as they render aberrant corporealities highly visible for the purposes of self-and-community identity-formation.

Though modernist aesthetics have long been characterized as representing marked shift toward relativistic individualism,[52] this chapter will demonstrate that *Mrs. Dalloway* troubles and complicates such assumptions. In the juxtaposition of Clarissa and Septimus, Woolf interrogates the boundaries of community and problematizes modern praxes of belonging. Though this novel has widely been recognized as a post-war elegy, a work of mourning amid the devastation of the First World War, relatively little attention has been paid to Woolf's deployment of the character of the war-wounded soldier in her project of communal boundary-making, an aesthetics of the (re)construction of the social body through the imaginative interplay between normative and non-normative figures. Woolf's concern in *Mrs. Dalloway* with the re/definition of the social body reflects and responds to a burgeoning body of literature on group psychology. Freud, inspired by predecessors like Gustave LeBon and William McDougall, began to postulate on the

[52] This is a shift often cited as emblematic of a definitive rupture with Victorian and fin-de-siècle literature and its more collectivist orientations.

dynamics of the group mind in the wake of the catastrophe of World War I. Likewise, *Mrs. Dalloway* takes as its principal concern the eponymous character's efforts to "combine, to connect" through the giving of a dinner party.

Such a plot line, however, provides important insight into what Rosemarie Garland-Thomson has identified as the shift from prodigy to pathology in the treatment of extraordinary bodies. As this chapter will show, in both Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith, Woolf creates characters who exemplify the shift Garland-Thomson speaks of. The pathological visibility of the extraordinary body, as discussed in previous chapters, is reversed in modernist texts, with the inassimilable body being rendered increasingly invisible, cloaked and contained through medicalization. As Ann Ardis notes in her analysis of Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out,* "St. John Hirst, modeled, as any number of critics have pointed out, after Lytton Strachey, espouses a Bloomsbury-ite's disdain for the grotesque fleshiness (read femaleness) of the material world" (3). As will be seen in this chapter, the repudiation of the flesh in such high modernist texts is galvanized by the intrinsic instability of the material body, its lack of amenability to control unless and until it is coopted, for better or worse, into the medico-scientific regime. *Mrs. Dalloway* illustrates the vexed position of the material body within modern power/knowledge structures, of which professionalized medicine is a particularly potent tool. Thus, while Woolf's injunction that "for the moderns…the point of interest lies very likely in the dark places of psychology" (qtd. in Gordon 19) may seem to endorse the sequestration of the material body into the purview and the control of medico-social structures, the novel's representations of Clarissa and Septimus undermine the privilege Woolf appears to afford of the mind over the body, problematizing the regulation of the visibility of physical (and, in particular, deviant) bodies by the disciplinary regimes which seek to direct and define modern subject-

formation as a project of community-making. In casting Septimus, the shell-shocked veteran of the working classes, as the foil of the affluent but no less materially embodied (and aging) Clarissa, Woolf embeds the understanding, representation, and treatment of the embodied subject in a complex network of economic, political, aesthetic, and scientific discourses. Further, she demonstrates that the decreasing visibility of inassimilable, extraordinary bodies is a hallmark of a post-World War I British modernity seeking to (re)constitute itself in the face of a global trauma in as much as the singular embodiment of the war-wounded veteran operates both as a material reminder of catastrophic loss and as an emblem of the intrinsic uncertainty embedded within an programmatics of collective healing. Unlike the countless monuments to the war dead and in contradistinction to the dead themselves, wounded and traumatized veterans proved in their resistant[53] embodiment the limitations of catharsis. Thus, if *Mrs. Dalloway* endeavors to articulate the work of mourning that must be accomplished before an act of collective re-creation in the aftermath of war can be achieved, then the deformed and dysfunctional bodies of veterans inevitably unsettle and undermine such projects. These inassimilable figures constitute the indefinable and unstable element that must be identified and contained if the new social body is to emerge as a bounded, discrete, and enduring entity. Woolf's masterpiece exemplifies this program of modern self-and-community-making by foregrounding the unprecedented potency of modern professional medicine in a collective project to deny and disavow those whose aberrance threatens the integrity and continuity of the modern, post-war British nation-state.

The novel's opening scene is paradigmatic of the shift from the individualist to the collectivist orientation characterizing post-war modernity. The narrative voice slips freely and randomly in and out of individual character's consciousness, at times assuming a poly-vocal

[53] Resistance is used here to refer to the embodied subject's inability or refusal to approximate to a socially-sanctioned degree with the normative ideal. This failure of assimilation may be formal, as in the case of amputation or disfigurement, or it may be functional, as in the case of "shell shock."

character speaking for the group as a whole. At the same time, the arresting images of the motorcade carrying some unknown but illustrious person, followed by the appearance of the plane writing messages which the passersby endeavor individually and as a unit to decipher, exemplify, as Gordon notes, the formation of a group through the collective concentration of attention and mental effort on a single object (183). Speculation as to the identity of the person in the motorcade gives way to an effort to divine the messages written in the sky. Thus, in this iconic first scene, Woolf seems to trace the evolution of a post-war nationalist identity from a foundation in what Freud might have viewed as a totemistic deference to an ego ideal—a charismatic leader of the monarchy or another political figurehead—to a more capitalistic one grounded in consumer consumption and mass marketing. Even more significant for the purposes of this study, Woolf's opening scene grounds this project of community-(re)making in collective (if unstable and evolving) processes of meaning-making, in which the fixation on and definition of the spectacular object unite individual subjects in a shared project of communication and understanding.

As has been discussed, at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century, early psychology's interest in the nature of individual consciousness began to expand to the focus on the nature of human consciousness within groups. For theorists like LeBon, McDougall, and Freud, the "group mind" operated both in alignment with and in excess of the expected parameters of individual consciousness. Thus, the group mind was, by its nature, extraordinary, possessing both the superhuman characteristics of superlative achievement—strength, vigor, courage, and morality—as well as the retrograde attributes of an atavistic primitivism—herd mentality, irrationalism, and barbaric cruelty. In his ground-breaking, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, LeBon asserts that "the substitution of the unconscious

action of crowds for the conscious activity of individuals is one of the principal characteristics of the age" (n.pg.). Furthermore, LeBon situates this not merely as an object of scientific inquiry but also as an instrument of great social and political import: "The philosopher who studies social phenomenal should bear in mind that side by side with their theoretical value they possess a practical value, and that this latter, *so far as the evolution of civilization is concerned*, is alone of importance" (n.pg., emphasis added). Thus, while the Victorian era and the fin de siècle projected collective questions, concerns, and anxieties on the material substance of extraordinarily embodied individuals, from racial and ethnic others to giants, dwarves, and conjoined twins, the modernist era shifted to a focus on the incorporeal and amorphous operation of the crowd and the latent, often unconscious, impulses which unite, drive, and direct it.

This shift to the interrogation of the nature and functioning of the group mind exemplifies an increasingly collectivist cultural concern, as the imago of the group began increasingly to replace the extraordinarily embodied individual upon whom cultural anxieties were projected and discharged. In his *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, Freud attributes group formation to the herd instinct as rooted in a fundamental "gregariousness" informing human nature. Freud writes,

> Biologically, this gregariousness is an analogy to multicellularity and as it were a continuation of it. From the standpoint of libido theory, it is a further manifestation of the inclination, which proceeds from the libido, and which is felt by all living beings of the same kind, to combine in more and more comprehensive units. The individual feels "incomplete" if he is alone. The dread shown by small children would seem already to be an expression of this herd instinct. Opposition to the herd is as good as separation from it, and is therefore anxiously avoided. But the herd turns away from anything that is new or unusual. The herd instinct would appear to be something primary, something "which cannot be split up." (ch. 9)

As had been explored in part one of this study, in the nineteenth century, anomalous bodies, society's so-called "monsters," were deployed to represent and to domesticate pervasive social concerns, from the "giant's" somaticization of the anxieties of imperial growth both at home and in the periphery to the conjoined twins' embodiment of the fear of the compromising of bodily integrity, of the contamination of the self from without and from within.

The increasing popularity of group psychology in the early twentieth century, however, suggests the diffusion of contemporary cultural anxieties. No longer focalized onto the bodies of single extraordinary individuals, the collectivist orientation of the early twentieth century casts the representation, interrogation, and discharging of social questions as a collective/communal project. More important for the purposes of this study, however, is the fact that the substitution of the collective for the individual signifies an increasingly potent trend in this era toward the public erasure of extraordinary bodies. As Freud notes, the formation of the group is predicated upon the homogeneity of the collective:

> What appears later on in society in the shape of *Gemeingeist*, *esprit de corps*, 'group spirit', etc., does not belie its derivation from what was originally envy. No one must want to put himself forward, everyone must be the same and have the same. Social justice means that we deny ourselves many things so that others may have to do without them as well, or, what is the same thing, may not be able to ask for them. This demand for equality is the root of social conscience and the sense of duty. (Ibid.)

Collectives can only come into being when differences are erased or subsumed beneath the group identity. Inassimilable bodies are, by definition, incapable of such erasure; they are the heterogeneous element which the newly-formed group must abject or deny. In their ineradicable singularity, extraordinary bodies insist on an egoistic individuality that the normative[54] self must disavow and repress in order to become a part of the group.

[54] Rosemarie Garland-Thomson's term, the "normate," would also apply here.

It is no coincidence that the shift from the individual to the collective should take place in the first decades of the twentieth century. The progressive liberalism which had characterized British culture from the Enlightenment to the end of the nineteenth century was predicated upon an individualistic paradigm, the model of the autonomous Enlightenment subject. As will be explored later in this chapter, the ravages of World War I were particularly potent in subsuming Enlightenment individualism beneath a shifting but powerful tide of collectivism. As Froula notes,

> The war not only shattered millions of lives but unleashed a virulent nationalism that rent the economic and cultural fabric of what had been becoming an increasingly international civilization….Yet even as it seemed to negate even the idea of Enlightenment, it also dismantled four ancient empires, swept away an outworn social and political order and left Europe a "laboratory atop a vast graveyard" in which communism, fascism, and liberal democracy vied to promise the suddenly enfranchised masses a "New Order", a state of their own….By 1923 Freud's early confidence that Europeans would rebuild and perhaps improve their democratic and internationalist civilization after the war was losing ground to the totalitarian political orders that, fostered by the Versailles Treaty, were already beginning to form. (90)

Constipated Britons and Naked Germans: Entropy and Exhaustion at the End of Empire

In addition to the collectivist tendencies borne of the aftermath of the war, the ascendance and rapid decline of the British Empire from the second-half of the nineteenth century on also helped to incite the rabid nationalism which only grew with the hostilities of World War I. The imperialist enterprises in the colonial periphery demanded the imposition of a cohesive, impermeable, and potent British identity which would define and assure British presence against the threats it faced abroad. More significantly, this stalwart British nationalism, subsuming its

heterogeneous citizens beneath its homogenous auspices, would erect a formidable bulkhead against its enemies in theaters of war and of imperial conquest.

In her compelling analysis of Woolf's "nationalistic modernism," Petra Rau notes the powerful influence of the German peoples on British consciousness. According to Rau, in the early twentieth century, the Germans were a profound force acting on the British popular imagination. Configured as almost pure body, they emblematized both the voraciousness and the vigor that the British, with their faltering empire and slipping reputation on the world economic and political stage, seemed to lack. Moreover, German rapacity as it was characterized in the British paradigm, functioned as an object both of admiration and of revulsion; the seemingly endless vitality of the German body was a force to which the British, in the era's obsession with health restoratives—pills, potions, treatments, and cures—could only aspire. At the same time, however, the Germans' physical insatiability, the luxurious appetite which they seemed to devote their lives to satisfying, was equated with a primitive barbarism spurned by the upright British citizen.

It is within this context, then, that the shift in British models of physical embodiment in the years surrounding World War I can best be understood. The nineteenth century obsession with the extraordinary body situated anomalous corporeality within a context of profound individuality, the irruption of the prodigious within the collective to represent and transmogrify the culture (most often through the representations of its deepest questions, concerns, and fears), In the years surrounding World War I, such unsettling encounters of the other within were no longer a luxury. In the presence of a real and encroaching threat, such as in the massive figure of hale and hearty Germans, whose numbers on the ever-nearing front seemed to be infinite, the fracturing of the British public body by the extraordinary individual could no longer be

countenanced. Rau's analysis of Clarissa's rival for Clarissa's daughter's affection, Miss Kilman, is telling:

> A representative of the educated, working woman, she is too much of everything: too much brain and too much body. She represents Woolf's 'bad' modernity through all the trope we have already seen at work in pre-war fiction: unseemly appetite, German descent, excessive visibility, grotesque corporeality….She embodies the paradoxical phenomenon of the grotesque in combining excessive physicality and social marginality; the tension between her near-invisibility as a minor character and her spectral, monstrous omnipresence as a preoccupation. (131)

Indeed, it is precisely Miss Kilman's menacing omnipresence, the *threat* of her excessive, transgressive body which necessitates its invisibility, the exclusion which enables the normative group—defined by what it disavows—to form. As the quintessential hostess and the charismatic leader whose entire *raison d'etre* is "to combine, to create," it is no coincidence, then, that Clarissa should perceive Miss Kilman's threat as largely a threat to influence Clarissa's child, to re/create Elizabeth in Miss Kilman's image, rather than her own. Thus, the conjoined twins, "secret sharers," vampires, and Hottentot Venuses which populate fin de siècle Gothic romances as a projection of latent cultural anxieties over the integrity of the family and the perpetuation of a pure racial identity give way in this high modernist text to the spectral hauntings of very real, but highly marginalized, cultural others.

Significantly, World War I both prompted and rationalized the creation of a new, modern nationalist identity even as it engendered the means of bringing such a collectivist identity to fruition. Specifically, the war brought about a revised, prolific, and potent medical model which would ultimately come to play a powerful role in British paradigms regarding the acquisition and maintenance of the ideal citizen's body. As Fiona Reid argues in her analysis of "shell shock" in Britain, physical health began to be articulated in terms of civic obligation. Reid writes,

> Shell shock developed in a culture that already stressed the importance of moral responsibility for both mental and physical health. As the war developed, medical and military responses to shell shock repeatedly stressed the importance of will power and of the man's personal commitment to his own recovery. This emphasis upon self-control was not simply the consequence of military discipline during a wartime crisis; it also reflected a pre-existing culture. Eugene Sandow, the bodybuilder and "famous health specialist", ran a campaign for health, fitness and endurance at the beginning of the war, and stressed the way in which one could cultivate and develop nerve force and willpower. He offered books on the subjects of neurasthenia and nervous disorders and described neurasthenia in pejorative terms….Mr. Sandow insisted that "weakness is a crime today", and made clear links between neurasthenia and lack of military success. (15)

While extraordinary bodies had long been associated with a lack of control, an excessive individuality that was both dangerous and alluring, the World War I era coincided with and authorized the ascendance of a medicalized modernity which defined physical and mental health as a public virtue. Curatives were couched in militaristic terms, with the process of reaching, holding on to, or returning to a state of ideal wellness articulated through the language of a militaristic regime. Not surprisingly, of course, the failure to maintain such an ideal standard of wellness was represented in similarly militaristic language, as the "shirking" of one's duty, an offense against one's nation.

In addition to the extensive obligations of physical wellness borne of the World War I era, psychological wellness also became a duty to which every good British citizen was subject. This requirement played a particularly significant role in this period due to the widely-recognized epidemic of shell-shocked soldiers in this era. While late-nineteenth century psychologists like Charcot had long repudiated the ancient association of mental illness with females exclusively, it was not until World War I that the study and treatment of mental illness in males became ubiquitous. Bogousslavsky describes the frequently brutal methods deployed in

the treatment of shell-shocked veterans motivated by the rehabilitation model accounting "success" as the return of the soldier to the frontlines and informed in practice by the premise of illness—particularly psychiatric illness—as the failure of willpower:

> In the center at Tours, [Clovis] Vincent initially used faradization with "persuasion", which had initially been developed by Babinsky before the war for treating hysterics, but limited success encouraged him to develop a more painful but 'efficacious' method associating galvanic current with forced 'rehabilitation'. Usually, electric charges were repeatedly delivered on the affected parts of the body, while the doctor exhorted the patient to improve immediately….[Vincent] reported large statistics of successful results, with fighters quickly being sent back to the front, and only less than 3% failure….This therapy for war hysteria was not at all limited to France, and was used in the Allied and German troops as well, even with particularly aggressive methods, justified by a renewed emphasis of the concept of a "weakness of the will"….After the war, the future Nobel laureate Julius Wagner-Jauregg…had to face trial on this issue, where Freud testified in his favor. (154-156)

Further, as Reid notes, the treatment of shell shock in World War I veterans was fraught with complications, carrying with it a host of social and economic implications which impacted both the treatment and the overall understanding of the disorder:

> [M]ixed messages characterized popular perceptions of mental illness and also featured in the official discourse, which recognized the validity of nervous complaints while simultaneously making explicit associations between nervous debility, idleness, and fraud. The initial official responses to shell shock stemmed from research into fraudulent compensation claims in the workplace, and it is no coincidence that Sir John Collie, the pre-war expert in malingering, eventually became responsible for managing Homes of Recovery for shell-shocked men and for the allocation of war pensions. (16)

As a result of widespread efforts of men like Collie to prevent the distribution of government funds to "undeserving" veterans, Reid argues, the treatment of shell-shock came to be ensconced in the language of "detection" rather than diagnosis. While diagnosis would still situate the patient squarely within the modern medical model, the verbiage of "detection" foreground the

visibility of the patient, situating him firmly as the transmitter of embodied signs which, significantly, are decipherable only by expert authorities. Reid describes at great length the intensive training physicians, psychiatrists, and other authorities underwent in order to successfully differentiate between true sufferers and malingerers. Of special significance here is the fact that the visibility of the purportedly shell-shocked veteran was a highly dangerous reality to be carefully controlled if fraud was to be prevented: only the expert could read the material bodies of the veteran appropriately. Lay persons, the public at large, would be incapable of discerning between authentic illness and performance—a fact which simultaneously validated and necessitated the removal of the shell-shocked body from the purview of an inexpert public and its incorporation into medico-scientific regime. This reality is powerfully illustrated in Woolf's description of Septimus' first meeting with Dr. Bradshaw, who enjoyed

> the reputation (of the utmost importance in dealing with nerve cases) not merely of lightning skill, and almost infallible accuracy in diagnosis but of sympathy; tact; of understanding the human soul. He could see the first moment they came into the room (the Warren Smiths they were called); he was certain directly he saw the man; it was a case of extreme gravity. It was a case of complete breakdown—complete physical and nervous breakdown, with every symptom in an advanced stage, he ascertained in two or three minutes. (106)

This expertise in quick and rapid "detection" of authentic nervous illness eludes those uninitiated into the exclusive knowledge of the elite—the physicians, the scientists, the lawmakers (themselves frequently submissive to medical authority), and even those closest to the patient—wives, mothers, fathers—must acquiesce to their judgments, as does Lucrezia, despite her misgivings, when Sir William prescribes Septimus' removal to the country, alone, for psychiatric care and "instruction."

One key factor in the social understanding of shell shock was social class. As has been explored in previous chapters, the predisposition to physical and mental illness was situated largely with racial, gendered, and economic frameworks. Not only were women and racial/ethnic "others" configured as vulnerable to disease, so, too, were the lower classes. Such prejudices carried over, Reid asserts, into the discourse of and approach to shell shock. Diagnoses of shell shock in officers and other elites were often reluctantly given and couched in a language of heroism and ultimate recuperability. Reid writes, "there is a key categorical distinction between neurasthenic officers and hysterical men, and the subtext is clear: the man suffering from neurasthenia is more respectable and more refined than the man suffering from the more vulgar, and more physical, hysteria" (17). For common soldiers of the lower classes, diagnoses of nervous disorders were defined as both the manifestation of an innate and frequently inherited predisposition, as well as the enactment of a moral and civic failure, the dereliction of duty through weakness. Such class-based distinctions are evident time and again throughout *Mrs. Dalloway,* particularly in regard to Holmes' and Bradshaw's exhortations to Septimus to accept treatment: "'Nobody lives for himself alone," said Sir William, glancing at the photograph of his wife in Court dress. 'And you have a brilliant career before you,' said Sir William…. 'An exceptionally brilliant career'" (109). Likewise, when Dr. Holmes cajoles a suicidal Septimus to leave his bed, he does so on the grounds of the patriotic obligations of the bourgeois husband: "He had actually talked of killing himself to his wife, quite a girl, a foreigner, wasn't she? Didn't that give her a very odd idea of English husbands? Didn't one owe perhaps a duty to one's wife?" (102).

Such class differentiations in regard to shell shock extended into the treatment regimes prescribed for the condition. While officers and members of the upper class were sent to

recuperate at spa-like establishments where they would enjoy sumptuous meals and luxurious, private quarters, lower class soldiers suffering from shell shock would frequently be shunted off to over-crowded sanitariums on the Continental front lines. According to Reid, "A General Order in 1916 stated that any patient who was affected by nervous exhaustion 'arising from insufficient self-control' should be kept in France for treatment" (31). There, they would experience Spartan living conditions where they would be subjected to brutal treatments, including the electric shocks, described above, that were designed to "recondition" them to the demands of military life. Reid writes, "Psychologically wounded officers were housed in single rooms in secluded residences….in a very pleasant environment….Nervous casualties from the other ranks could be dispatched to filthy asylum-like conditions, but gentlemen-soldiers went to something more like a country house" (33).

This class-based dichotomy in the treatment of illness plays out in important ways in Woolf's twinning of Clarissa and Septimus. While both suffer from severe illnesses, the understanding and the treatment of their illnesses vary greatly. Though Woolf suggests that Clarissa's illness is some sort of heart condition that is never named, Craig Gordon asserts that the symptoms and treatments Clarissa undergoes are suggestive of neurasthenia, a form of hysteria with which Woolf was also repeatedly diagnosed. The text is never definitive in regard to Clarissa's diagnosis, but the refusal to specifically name her disorder aligns well with attitudes toward illness, and particularly psychiatric illness, among the upper class. In the novel's first scene, Evelyn Whitbread is depicted as frequenting the finest physicians in Europe on a quest for a diagnosis of symptoms which, ultimately, cannot be discussed in polite company:

> [T]he Whitbreads came "to see doctors." Times without number Clarissa had visited Evelyn Whitbread in a nursing home. Was Evelyn ill again? Evelyn was a good deal out of sorts, said Hugh, intimating a kind of pout or swell of his very well-covered, manly,

> extremely handsome, perfectly upholstered body (he was almost too well dressed always, but presumably had to be, with his little job of Court) that his wife had some internal ailment, nothing serious, which, as an old friend. Clarissa Dalloway would quite understand without requiring him to specify. Ah yes, she did of course; what a nuisance; and felt very sisterly and oddly conscious at the same time of her hat. (4)

Likewise, the erasure of Clarissa's diagnosis from the text suggests the disavowal of the pathological from elite purview. The frailties of mind and body are neither to be discussed nor seen in circles which, as will be explored later in this chapter, thrive upon spectacularity, of which Clarissa is the ultimate emblem.

For Septimus, however, such an erasure is impossible. Woolf devotes a great deal of time to the exploration of Septimus' social class and his attempted rise to the ranks of the bourgeois through all the traditional forms of the impoverished young clerk aspiring for a better life:

> [S]o that he was, on the whole, a border case, neither one thing nor the other, might end with a house at Purley and a motor car, or continue renting apartments in back streets all his life; one of those half-educated, self-educated men whose education is all learnt from books borrowed from public libraries, read in the evening after the day's work, on the advice of well-known authors consulted by letter. (93)

As that of a working-class male, Septimus' shell shock, predictably, is situated as a failure of performance, the neglect of his civic obligations as both a promising business man and as a husband and potential father. In his years as a clerk preceding the war, Septimus' employer, Mr. Brewer, sees in Septimus the potential to rise to bourgeois affluence, a potential, predicated, significantly, upon his ability to "keep his health," for which Mr. Brewer advises a vigorous athletic regimen and hearty food. But when the war arrives, it precipitates for Septimus, as for so many of his class, the transition from anemic boyhood into virile masculinity. Woolf writes,

> There in the trenches the change which Mr. Brewer desired when he advised football was produced instantly; he developed

> manliness; he was promoted; he drew the attention, indeed the affection of his officer, Evans, by name. It was a case of two dogs playing on a hearth-rug. (95-96)

It is no coincidence, then, that after the war is over and Septimus returns to his previous employment, his heroic performance as a soldier is embraced as a source of collective pride and obligation:

> At the office they advanced him to a post of considerable responsibility. They were proud of him; he had won crosses. "You have done your duty; it is up to us—" began Mr. Brewer; and could not finish, so pleasurable was his emotion. (98)

Thus, when Septimus begins to exhibit the signs and symptoms of shell-shock, symptoms so severe that they ultimately destroy his ability to perform in the workplace, it is taken as a collective, rather than an individual, failure. It is telling then, that even efforts to seek medical care are couched by experts in economic terms, as is evinced when Septimus and Lucrezia request a second opinion and Dr. Holmes, the general practitioner, asserts the inappropriateness of the request: "And if they were rich people, said Dr. Holmes, looking ironically around the room, by all means let them go to Harley Street; if they had no confidence in him, said Dr. Holmes, looking not quite so kind" (104).

Someone Has to Die: The Extraordinary Body as Scapegoat

As has been explored throughout this study, the reception of the extraordinary body, the body which fails to "perform" appropriately within normative social parameters, is predicated upon presumptions of that body's predictability and controllability—or lack thereof. The greater support and compassion afforded to officers and elites battling physical and mental illnesses derive to a large extent, as we have seen, from expectations of their ultimate recuperability to the

norm. Intrinsic or inherited illnesses, such as those presupposed in the lower classes, offer less hope of cure or containment than those illnesses which derive from external forces, from trauma or environment. Thus, while the elites are subject to palliative therapies designed to restore their minds and bodies to their purportedly "natural" state, the lower classes endure the harsher, more punitive therapies designed to drive out or at least domesticate the pathological tendencies which reside within. For Septimus, the tokens of his nervous debility are profoundly material:

> [A]ll the other crimes raised their heads and shook their fingers and jeered and sneered over the rail of the bed in the early hours of the morning at the prostrate body which lay realizing its degradation…and was so pocked and marked with vice that women shuddered when they saw him in the street. The verdict of human nature on such a wretch was death. (101)

Thus, while approaches toward physical and mental illness vary greatly among the classes, all are united in one important aspect: the removal of the sufferer from traditional society. As Reid notes, in the years surrounding World War I, the number of in-patient psychiatric hospitals being built in and around London exponentially increased, particularly those dedicated to the treatment of shell-shocked soldiers. This surge in the practice of institutionalizing the unwell coincides in important ways with an increasing trend in the early twentieth century toward what disability theorists have identified as the cure, cover, or kill paradigm.

The visibility of the extraordinary subject has long been an instrument for the reflection and interrogation of social norms and structures. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the foregrounding of anomalous bodies, though often conducted in rigidly controlled circumstances, authorized such bodies as objects of speculation for the lay public and professional audiences alike. From freak shows to museum displays to the celebrated presentations of Charcot in the medical

theater, the Enlightenment's "dare to know" rendered extraordinary bodies highly visible: the tactile manifestation of society's deepest questions, concerns, and fears.

However, with the rise of the modern professional sciences, the visibility of the extraordinarily embodied came under the increasing control of medical authorities and was soon eclipsed by a medical discourse which took the place of tangible manifestations of physical and mental pathology. In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault writes,

> The space of *configuration* of the disease and the space of *localization* of the illness in the body have been superimposed, in medical experience, for only a relatively short period of time—the period that coincides with nineteenth-century medicine and the privileges accorded to pathological anatomy. This is the period that marks the suzerainty of the gaze, since in the same perceptual field, following the same continuities or the same breaks, experience reads at a glance the visible lesions of the organism and the coherence of pathological forms; the illness is articulated exactly on the body, and its logical distribution is carried out at once in terms of anatomical masses. The 'glance' has simply to exercise its right of origin over truth. (3-4)

The rampant construction of asylums and sanitariums in this era testifies to the growing control exerted by medical experts on the pathological body in the early twentieth century, a reality poignantly illustrated in a passage from Woolf's novel in which Septimus, walking around London, watches a group of patients from a nearby institution: "[O]nce a maimed file of lunatics being exercised or displayed for the diversion of the populace (who laughed aloud), ambled and nodded and grinned past him, in the Tottenham Court Road, each half apologetically, yet triumphantly, inflicting his hopeless woe" (100). Of paramount importance here is that the "lunatics" described are presumably being "exercised or displayed" only under the auspices of the medical authorities of the asylum/institution they inhabit, not by virtue of their own will.[55]

[55] In *Modernism and Eugenics: Woolf, Eliot, Yeats, and the Culture of Degeneration*, Donald Childs describes a similar scene which Woolf herself had witnessed and her "negative" eugenicist response to it. Childs cites a 1915 journal entry as an early indicator of Woolf's eugenic orientations. Woolf writes, "[W]e met & had to pass a long

The important distinction between this display of the "lunatics" and that of earlier prodigies and freaks, such as Daniel Lambert, Sarah Baartman, or the McKoy and Hilton sisters, is the collective nature of this display. Whereas the exhibition of Victorian and fin-de-siècle prodigies foreground the singularity of their embodiments, showcasing them as exemplars of wondrous, if potentially threatening, individuality, the asylum patients here are displayed collectively, their individuality subsumed by their status as patients and inmates. In their co-optation within the medical model, their institutionalization, they form an homogenous group that, in its failure of assimilation, opposes and thereby affirms the normative collective, the new, post-war social body operating within strict and rigorously defined parameters of "appropriate" form and functioning.

It is significant that Septimus should witness this spectacle just as he, himself, is making his way to the offices of Dr. Bradshaw on the elite Harley Street. It is a sight that prompts Septimus immediately to ask whether he, too, would go mad. The scene is arresting not only to Septimus, but to the other passersby, for whom the "display" of the lunatics elicits an uncomfortable laughter borne of fear. Such an exhibition, now under the control of the medical authorities, authorizes and motivates Bradshaw's doctrine of Proportion:

> Health we must have; and health is proportion; so that when a man comes into your room and says he is Christ (a common delusion), and has a message, as they mostly have, and threatens, as they do,

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line of imbeciles….and then one realized that every one in that long line was a miserable ineffective shuffling idiotic creature….It was perfectly horrible" (qtd. Childs, ch. 1). The passage concludes, Childs notes, with Woolf's declaration that "They (the patients) should certainly be killed" (Ibid.). Though such sentiments appear shocking in the post-Nazi era, the sentiment embraced here by Woolf is emblematic of the era's concern with the purification, protection, and preservation of the social body. Moreover, the collectivist concern associated with such eugenicist ideologies is paired with an admittedly paternalistic but not wholly condemnable concern for the sufferer. Woolf here describes the inmates as "miserable…creatures", echoing prevailing assumptions the non-normative bodies are a source of agony to those trapped within them. Within this paradigm, pathology, whether physical, developmental, or psychological, is an untenable state that robs the sufferer of his/her humanity and which necessitates the eugenic intervention of the professional (especially the medical professional) to end present suffering and to ensure that such suffering is not perpetuated in the future. Such intercessions include not only voluntary and compulsory sterilization or controlled reproduction, but also, at the furthest extreme, euthanasia.

> to kill himself, you invoke proportion; order rest in bed; rest in solitude; silence and rest; rest without friends, without books, without messages; six months' rest; until a man who went in weighing seven stone six comes out weighing twelve….
>
> Worshipping proportion, Sir William not only prospered himself but made England prosper, secluded her lunatics, forbade childbirth, penalised despair, made it impossible for the unfit to propagate their views until they, too, shared his sense of proportion—his, if they were men, Lady Bradshaw's if they were women. (110-111)

While the power to define, control, and contain the extraordinary body was increasingly being claimed by and for medical experts, such authority was not infrequently bestowed—or happily relinquished--by the lay public itself. In *The Black Stork*, Martin S. Pernick study of the mercy killings of disabled and deformed infants in the United States in the early twentieth century, the author traces increasing public and institutional demands for the censorship of graphic medical images and discourse (including that related to the death by medical neglect of "defective" infants) between the 1910s and 1930s:

> "I think all monstrosities should be permitted to die," wrote one university president from New Mexico, "but I do condemn the physician for making such a public ado about the matter." Columbia University sociology chairman Franklin H. Giddings applauded the death of "molasses-minded" mental defectives, but felt it was a "question that should be considered soberly, thoughtfully and by rigorous intellectual processes. To put it up to the general public in all the emotional and imaginative setting of a photo-play is, in my judgment, an utterly wrong thing to do." (118-119)

By 1930, efforts to censor images of medical conditions and treatments by various state and motion picture industry regulators were consolidated in the first Production Code of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, which, among its list of proscribed images included images of disease and deformity. Thus, the misgivings expressed by the medical and academic communities regarding the "appropriateness" of public discussion—and images—of

disease, deformity, and disability—had evolved into a paternalistic discourse espoused by critics and the lay public alike that authorized the institutional "sanitization" of the entertainment industry. The expert opinions of medical and intellectual authorities only confirmed what the lay public had long feared about exposure to the visibly diseased and deformed:

> Some opponents meant it literally when they insisted that film depictions of disease were sickening. *Variety* critic Jonathan Lowe worried that *The Black Stork*'s vivid portraits of defectives would cause birth defects if pregnant women were allowed to see them. Others who believed that powerful emotions influenced bodily health in adults insisted that films like *The Black Stork* threatened the health of all audiences, not just the captive fetal audience. (123)

Such concerns were not only prevalent in the US, but were increasingly operative across England, where the situating of physical and mental illness within the purview of the medical expert coincided with an equal erasure of pathology within the parameters of "normal" social life. Constructions of "normality" emanating from the medical authority outward to the lay public play a significant role in Woolf's text not only in Bradshaw's doctrine of Proportion but in its corollary: Conversion. Woolf writes,

> But Proportion has a sister, less smiling, more formidable, a Goddess even now engaged—in the heat and sands of India, the mud and swamp of Africa, the purlieus of London, wherever in short the climate or the devil tempts men to fall from the true belief which is her own….Conversion is her name and she feasts on the wills of the weakly, loving to impress, to impose, adoring her own features stamped on the face of the populace….offers help but desires power….had her dwelling in Sir William's heart, though concealed, as she mostly is, under some plausible disguise; some venerable name; love, duty, self-sacrifice. How he would work—how toil to raise funds, propagate reforms, initiate institutions! But conversion, fastidious Goddess, loves blood better than brick, and feasts most subtly on the human will. (111-112)

Furthermore, as Septimus' response to "human nature" in the forms of Holmes and Bradshaw indicates, when such conversion to the mandates of proportion could not be accomplished through persuasion, it was done through force:

> Sir William had a friend in Surrey where they taught, what Sir William frankly admitted was a difficult art—a sense of proportion. There were, moreover, family affection, honour, courage; and a brilliant career. All of these had in Sir William a resolute champion. If they failed him, he had to support police and the good of society, which, he remarked very quietly, would take care, down in Surrey, that these unsocial impulses, bred more than anything by the lack of good blood, were held in control. And then stole out from her hiding-place and mounted her throne that Goddess whose list is to override opposition, to stamp indelibly in the sanctuaries of others the image of herself. Naked, defenceless, the exhausted, the friendless received the impress of Sir William's will. He swooped; he devoured. He shut people up. It was this combination of decision and humanity that endeared Sir William so greatly to the relations of his victims. (113-114)

This process whereby individuals come to embrace the forces which would subjugate and discipline them and their loved ones is, as Freud notes, a remnant of the horde instinct whereby the collective body is preserved both through the expulsion of anomalous bodies without and destructive impulses from within. Such a repudiation of the disruptive element is accomplished through the submission of the individual ego to an ego ideal, corporealized in a totemistic fashion in the body of a charismatic leader, (real or fictitious) cultural hero, or other archetypal figure:

> This demand for equality is the root of social conscience and the sense of duty. It reveals itself unexpectedly in the syphilitic's dread of infecting other people, which psychoanalysis has taught us to understand. The dread exhibited…corresponds to their violent struggles against the unconscious wish to spread their infection to other people; for why should they alone be infected and cut off from so much? Why not other people as well?....Thus, social feeling is based upon the reversal of what was first a hostile feeling into a positively-toned tie of the nature of an

> identification…effected under the influence of a common tender tie with a person outside the group. (ch. 9)

This trend lies at the heart of *Mrs. Dalloway* as well insofar as both Clarissa and her foil, Septimus, function in significant ways as spectacular objects in as much as both exhibit a kind of totemistic charm which serves to absorb and diffuse the discrete individualities of the group through identification ("the tender tie") with the one outside the group, forming a collective group through the centering of attention on a singular object—the hostess (Clarissa) and the patient (Septimus). Clarissa's success as a hostess, for example, is predicated largely upon the extent to which she is able to achieve a normative visibility. The text is replete with references to Clarissa's posturing, her extraordinary capacity to "fill the room," which Peter both admires and repudiates. Peter recalls this exceptional ability as one which Clarissa has enjoyed throughout her life:

> She came into a room; she stood, as he had often seen her, in a doorway with lots of other people round her. But it was Clarissa one remembered. Not that she was striking; not beautiful at all; there was nothing picturesque about her; she never said anything particularly clever; there she was, however; there she was. (84)

Indeed, the narrative itself may be seen principally as Clarissa's quest to establish the ideal conditions through which Clarissa may exhibit herself as object, the focal point through which the spectators can bring together their admiring gaze. For Clarissa, however, this ambition is less an exercise in vanity than an effort to offer herself as the instrument and ground through which her efforts "to combine, to create" will be brought to fruition. Woolf writes,

> And she felt quite continuously a sense of their existence; and she felt what a waste; and she felt what a pity; and she felt if only they could be brought together; and so she did it. And it was an offering; to combine, to create; but to whom?....An offering for the sake of offering, perhaps. Anyhow, it was her gift. Nothing else had she of the slightest importance. (136-137)

In this capacity, then, Clarissa resembles the iconic leader Freud describes in his analysis of group formation and psychology. The charismatic leader, for Freud, is one on whom the desires of the group are projected and in whom their individual personalities are subsumed.

The inherent interconnectedness of individual subjects lies at the root of *Mrs. Dalloway*, as is evinced by repeated images, related both to nature and to culture, which seek to replace the atomism of autonomous Enlightenment subjectivity with, as Gordon notes, a new vision of community-making which, he argues, is configured most significantly through the imagery of the "neural tissues" and "fibrous networks" of sympathy which diffuse the boundaries of the personal self and connect human beings to one another. As Clarissa walks the crowded streets of her beloved London on her way to buy the flowers for her party, she muses,

> [D]id it matter that she must inevitably cease completely; all this must go on without her; did she resent it; or did it not become consoling to believe that death ended absolutely? But that somehow in the streets of London, on the ebb and flow of things, here, there, she survived, Peter survived, lived in each other, she being part, she was positive, of the trees at home; of the house there, ugly, rambling, all to bits and pieces as it was; part of the people she had never met; being laid out like a mist between the people she knew best, who lifted her on their branches as she had seen the trees lift the mist, but it spread ever so far, her life, herself. (7-8)

This dynamic of diffusion and connection is experienced not only by Clarissa, but by each of the characters to some extent for another. Lady Bruton, for example, experiences her connection with Richard Dalloway and Hugh Whitbread physically, within her body, after having lunched with them:

> And they went further and further from her, being attached to her by a thin thread (since they had lunched with her) which would stretch and stretch, get thinner and thinner as they walked across London; as if one's friends were attached to one's body. (125)

Significantly, Lady Bruton foregrounds this feeling of connection with Richard and Hugh in her having just lunched with them. Like Clarissa, for Lady Bruton, it is the capacity to participate

together in culturally-sanctioned activities[56] which help to inspire, define, and perpetuate this feeling of communal belonging, the dissolution of the boundaries of the self through an on-going, though highly prescriptive, form of community-making and re-making.

It seems hardly coincidental that the imagery informing Woolf's novel parallels in significant ways LeBon's descriptions of the group mind, which implicate the dissolution of the bounded self in the workings of a sort of collective unconscious, imaged as the waves of a great ocean:

> Perceptible phenomena may be compared to the waves, which are the expression on the surface of the ocean of deep-lying disturbances of which we know nothing….[Y]et there are…acts in which they appear to be guided by those mysterious forces which the ancients denominated destiny, nature, or providence, which we call the voices of the dead, and whose power it is impossible to overlook….It would seem, at times, as if there were latent forces in the inner being of nations which serve to guide them. (n.pg.)

LeBon's "perceptible phenomena" which reflect the "deep-lying disturbances" of the group subconscious is expressed in *Mrs. Dalloway* in the dialectic formed between the novel's most illustrious symbol, the chiming of Big Ben, and the bells of St. Margaret's, its "feminine" counterpart. Throughout the novel, Big Ben's "leaden circles" are configured as irrevocable, inviolable, and inexorable. They elicit a hush from the crowd and a sense of anticipation, bordering on dread, in the seconds before their first strike. The leaden circles do not merely chronicle the hours, they *impose* them, demanding submission to the Law of the Father which would regulate, parcel, standardize, systematize, and subjugate human experience to the chronological mandates of the clock.[57] Juxtaposed against the commanding tones of Big Ben are the chimes of St. Margaret's, which

[56] An example would be Lady Bruton's "exquisite luncheons."
[57] Indeed, the hallmark and great pride of British modernity is that all the trains run on time.

> like a hostess who comes into her drawing-room on the very stroke of the hour and finds her guests there already. I am not late. No, it is precisely half-past eleven, she says. Yet, though she is perfectly right, her voice, being the voice of the hostess, is reluctant to inflict its individuality. Some grief for the past holds it back; some concern for the present. It is half-past eleven, she says, and the sound of St. Margaret's glides into the recesses of the heart and buries itself in ring after ring of sound, like something alive which wants to confide itself, to disperse itself, to be, with a tremor of delight, at rest—like Clarissa herself. (54)

Unlike the formidable and irrefutable bells of Big Ben, the chimes of St. Margaret's privilege connection above Law; they are both elegy and steward, uniting present and past and self and others through the tender services of the hostess. Like LeBon's "voices of the dead" which galvanize the unseen currents driving the waves of surface phenomena, the tension between the bells of Big Ben and the chimes of St. Margaret's inaugurate a new formulation of community-making which incorporate the feminine[58] while acknowledging the inexorable Law of the Father.

Mrs. Dalloway's double plot structure elaborates on the dialectic symbolized through Big Ben and St. Margaret's insofar as Septimus operates as the scapegoat to the Law of the Father, the sacrifice required to enable Clarissa, the quintessential hostess, to bring her project "to combine, to create" to fruition and, as a consequence, to unite her friends in a new, if ephemeral, community. Like Clarissa, Septimus is also a spectacular object, but his inability to confine his spectacular embodiment within normative parameters renders him pathological, amenable to correction or confinement. Clarissa's station in life, shored up by her fortuitous marriage to Dalloway and her own unimpeachable knack for social convention, situates her squarely in the paradigmatic role of the upper class hostess. As such, she astutely embodies her ideal, the contingencies of somatic experience erased by the obligations and strictures of social norms.

[58] This includes the dissolution of the boundaries between self and other.

Septimus, on the other hand, is the inassimilable other in whom the verities of physical and mental life defy efforts at remediation. Time and again, Septimus is depicted in the novel as an obstructive and unsettling force. In the illustrious opening scene, which Gordon describes as an ideal example of group formation within the novel, Septimus is represented as the paradigmatic outsider whose hallucinations exclude him from the nascent collective developed through a shared locus of attention.[59] Importantly, while the spectators gaze from a distance at the passing limousine, wondering silently and aloud as to whom it contains, Septimus steps into the street and arrests its progress: "It is I who am blocking the way, he thought. Was he not being looked and pointed at; was he not weighted there, rooted to the pavement, for a purpose? But for what purpose?" (14-15) Subsequently, when the spectators turn their attention to the skywriter, reading in the letters collective messages most often derived from commerce, Septimus discovers not a communal message but an individualistic, personal one which, as Gordon notes, is aesthetic rather than commercial: "So, thought Septimus, looking up, they are signaling to me. Not indeed in actual words; that is, he could not read the language yet; but it was plain enough, this beauty, this exquisite beauty" (22).

This scene, therefore, is a crucial early demonstration of Septimus' role in the narrative, as well as of the vital differences between him and his seeming twin, Clarissa. While Clarissa's spectacular objectification serves as the unifying force within her social group, Septimus' visibility is divisive, as is evinced in Lucrezia's conflicting desire to reveal and to conceal their suffering:

> People must notice; people must see. People, she thought, looking at the crowd staring at the motor car; the English people, with their children and their horses and their clothes, which she admired in a

[59] The first instance is on the passing limousine presumably containing some illustrious person—a royal or a head of state—and the second is on the plane writing ambiguous messages (later revealed to be advertisements) in the sky.

> way; but they were 'people' now, because Septimus had said, 'I will kill myself'; an awful thing to say. Suppose they had heard him? She looked at the crowd. Help, help! She wanted to cry out to butchers' boys and women….But failure one conceals. She must take him away into some park. (15)

Septimus' physical presence impedes the progress of the great man or woman of the Empire, even as his visibly inappropriate jubilation at the sight of the skywriter undermines the project of collective meaning-making inspired by the sight of the plane. This frustration of meaning is a recurring theme throughout the text, as primary and tangential characters alike watch Septimus' actions and, especially, Septimus' interactions with Lucrezia, and misinterpret them. That the meanings assigned to Septimus' actions should reflect the idiosyncratic cares and concerns of the observer illustrates yet again the extent to which anomalous bodies are made to signify broader meanings, carrying the load of collective questions and anxieties with which they may have no relation.

The transference of symbolic significance onto the extraordinary other inevitably ties with efforts in the early twentieth century to contain the dangerous force of this emotionally and ideologically charged figure. As Cohen argues, such efforts can be most clearly delineated in the seemingly contradictory behaviors toward the war wounded and the war dead. In describing the exclusion of disabled veterans from the Peace Procession of 1919 which celebrated the return of living and whole soldiers while honoring the war dead, Cohen writes:

> Disabled veterans watched the parade from the sidelines. Instead of an invitation to march in the procession, men in hospital blue were relegated to special grandstands not far from widows and orphans. For those who had lost limbs, there was an "alternative privilege": a paid trip home with ten shillings allowance for expenses. To the government's undoubted relief, most availed themselves of the opportunity. (101)

At the same time as the war wounded were shunted off to grandstands, asylums, and long-term care institutions, post-war Britain was characterized by the call to mourning and remembrance; "Lest we forget" resounded in virtually every corner of the Empire, implicating all British citizens in dutiful remembrances to both honor the victims of war and to prevent the repetition of the tragedy. Significantly, however, the work of mourning and remembrance was complicated by ambivalent attitudes toward the dead and the mentally and physically wounded. Cohen writes,

> Disabled veterans were segregated: in sheltered workshops, in homes in outlying suburbs, in rehabilitation centers. They rarely took part in the Armistice Day parades. Disabled veterans in Britain were not forgotten. Loyal subscribers like Miss Hilda Monamy King continued to remember them with monthly checks. However, they were never fully rehabilitated either as workers or as citizen. The Great War's most conspicuous legacy, they became its living memorials. (102)

The honored dead were invoked with every injunction that survivors remember and, as King notes in his studies of war monuments, memorials to the fallen dotted the English landscape. The construction of and the meditation on these monuments served to unite the British in a common act of mourning and remembrance, consolidating a modern British identity through the trauma of war and the homogenization of grief. Indeed, references to these monuments abound in *Mrs. Dalloway,* and characters are frequently depicted as experiencing unexpected flashes of war memory, almost as though the citizens themselves suffered a taste of the post-traumatic disorders which assail Septimus and his shell-shocked brethren. In a scene bearing remarkable resemblance to the "display of lunatics" witnessed by Septimus earlier in the day, Peter Walsh watches a parade of young soldiers on the march:

> [O]n they marched, past him, past every one, in their steady way, as if one will worked legs and arms uniformly, and life, with its varieties, its irreticences, had been laid under a pavement of

> monuments and wreaths and drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline. One had to respect it; one might laugh; but one had to respect it, he thought. There they go, thought Peter Walsh, pausing at the edge of the pavement; and all the exalted statues, Nelson, Gordon, Havelock, the black, spectacular images of great soldiers stood looking ahead of them, as if they too had made the same renunciation…trampled under the same temptations, and achieved at length a marble stare. But the stare Peter Walsh did not want for himself in the least; though he could respect it in others. He could respect it in boys. They don't know the troubles of the flesh yet. (56)

While soldiers and civilians alike largely aspired to the "marble stare" of the war-hardened hero, the flesh intervenes to belie the seeming invincibility of the memorialized heroes. Even the young soldiers whose marches arrest traffic and whose shoulders carry the burden of national pride are themselves all too embodied, expressing the vulnerability of the flesh: "But they did not look robust. They were weedy for the most part, boys of sixteen, who might, to-morrow, stand behind bowls of rice, cakes of soap on counters" (55). The seeming lack of vigor in the young soldiers on whom the survival of the British Empire will someday ultimately depend reflects broader anxieties concerning the vulnerability and ultimate failure of the British body. Rau writes,

> The English body remained a social body, even if its symptoms were manifestations of a diseased individuality. It was firmly locked in a market economy in which a vast patent medicine system promised cure (not perfectibility!) through consumption. Somehow, the body seemed out of place in modernity, too concrete, and it its materiality newly inadequate. (126)

As Rau's analysis suggests, in a climate of pervasive fears over the materiality of the body, medical intervention, in the form of the consumption of medically-authorized curatives, is not looked to both for the rehabilitation of the dysfunctional body and as the means to deny and deflect its malfunction.

It is no wonder, then, that soldiers wounded in body and mind received comparatively little public attention beyond the various government and civilian relief agencies designed to economically support the wounded. While the plethora of national war monuments united all Britons in a communal act of remembrance, the living wounded, as has been discussed, were not typically included in these acts of remembrance or commemorated in war memorials. Such a prioritization of the honored dead over the living wounded, indeed, exemplifies a fetishizing of the dead which the living could not withstand. In their immutable absence, the dead, like the monuments erected in their honor, could bear the weight of the signification communally ascribed to them. The meaning of their sacrifice would be imposed collectively from without, enabling a communal discharge of grief while also activating and authorizing a shared project of meaning-making. In the years following the war, postures toward the honored dead enabled the creation of a modern, British national identity, a project sorely needed in a nation ravaged by war and shaken by the eclipse of its imperial, economic, and technological dominance on the world stage in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Unlike the war dead, however, the wounded could not bear silently and perfectly the significations imposed upon them by a society seeking to redefine itself. Agencies like the Ex-Services' Welfare Society (ESWS), which lobbied for public recognition of and assistance for the war wounded, argued that these soldiers were forced to bear the burden of the act of remembrance to which all Britons were obligated, with the important exception that, for the shell shocked and wounded veteran, such remembrances were perpetual and all-consuming. While providing a powerful rationale for veterans' aid programs, this distinction nevertheless gives important clues to the seemingly paradoxical treatment of the dead versus the wounded. Disability scholars have long noted the discursively amorphous character of the disabled body,

its inherent instability defying both control and concrete understanding. Unlike the unchanging dead, the living wounded not only bear the burden of remembrance in their bodies and minds, but they also problematize the constellation of significations that a collective project of identity-re/formation would impose upon them. Deborah Cohen describes the case of Charles Neal, a wounded ex-serviceman whose adamant refusal to abide by the proscriptions of the philanthropic agencies designed to aid wounded veterans both showcased and problematized the precarious social position of such men:

> Disabled ex-servicemen turned to philanthropy when the state failed to provide for them. Yet, as Charles Neal discovered, the objects of charity could not live as they liked. Their conduct was proscribed. There were standards to be met. On the "outside", as Neal put it, a man could peddle stationary without fear of the consequences. However, as a tenant at the War Seal Mansions, Neal had to abide by a different set of rules or face eviction. To live in the War Seal Mansions, Neal had to surrender a measure of freedom….Neal asked only for the capacity to provide for his family….At the same time, the rehabilitation of individuals was not [the philanthropists'] only priority….Above all, they viewed charity work as a means of social reform, the practical incarnation of their (often unorthodox) principles….[D]isabled men soon found themselves entangled in the philanthropists' schemes. Their own needs became a means to a larger end. (117)

As will be shown in the final sections of this chapter, Septimus, as scapegoat, also functions as a means to a larger end. News of his death authorizes, motivates, and gives meaning to Clarissa's efforts to throw her party, a party on the brink of failure until word of the suicide unites the group in a collective act of sympathy, their remembrance of the dead, like the remonstrations of the war memorials and parades themselves, enabling the creation of new community where dissolution had been imminent through their shared focus on the now-absent object.

As has been widely noted, World War I, as the first technological war, created a league of wounded veterans suffering catastrophic physical injuries. Landmines and aerial bombings

meant that thousands of veterans would be returning from the front with missing and deformed limbs. Indeed, facial injuries were so common and so horrific that they came to be called *les guelles cassées*[60] by the French. Even for those soldiers who escaped visible physical injuries, the psychological toll was often just as debilitating, as soldiers frequently sought to heal their trauma through the inadvertent and endless replaying of it—hence the injunction to continuous remembrance for the shell-shocked veteran.

The saturation of modern city streets with the broken bodies and minds of the war wounded, however, frustrated attempts at a cathartic communal meaning-making because as both agents and sufferers, the war wounded sought the right to ascribe their own significations to their war experiences. Such meanings not infrequently clashed with those of the civilian community seeking to define and then move on from the war. Even where no conflict existed, however, the sight of the extreme physical and mental suffering endured by the veterans inevitably gestured toward the unthinkable, the sense of futility and meaninglessness which would come to haunt twentieth century estimations of the "Great War." Cohen cites a particularly telling passage from a 1934 edition of the British Legion's *Journal* which captures the destabilizing force of the war-wounded incapable of re-assimilating into normative British society:

> A man who wears a V.C. on his coat lapel, or an empty sleeve, or a sagging trousers leg, or whose lungs are still racked by the effects of enemy gas, is of far less account to the community in which he dwells than one who has a two-seater car in his garage and the money to pay his domestic bills on the nail. That is War. (Qtd. in Cohen 102)

Likewise, Septimus's cooptation into the powers of "human nature," in the forms of Holmes and Bradshaw, derives less from the desire to relieve his own mental anguish than to restore him to the "brilliant career" and the faithful duties of a good "English husband." If the Great War had

[60] The term literally translated means "the men with smashed faces."

been motivated by the desire to preserve and perpetuate British-style civilization for the future of mankind, then the presence of soldiers now unfitted by the war for participation in civilized modernity would seem to repudiate and diminish the collective sacrifice.

The exclusion of the wounded veteran from public acts of remembrance and the attempts to contain and condition the war wounded in mental asylums or rehabilitation institutions function to salvage the project of collective identity-re/formation, with the war as its catalyst. As Reid notes, within these institutions, the effort to restore moral and, by extension, civic health was as significant as any effort toward physical or psychological healing. The projects extend the paradigms of optimal health as a public virtue and obligation, discussed earlier in this chapter, to the treatment of the war wounded. These are paradigms which play out powerfully in *Mrs. Dalloway* and in particular in Dr. Bradshaw's chilling paean to Proportion. Bradshaw's frequent references to the "places" throughout the countryside to which he sends his troubled patients in order to restore their sense of proportion is a not-so-veiled reference to the institutionalizing fervor of the era. The "friends" of Dr. Bradshaw who wait in these residential facilities to "help" patients regain their proportion are the medical and psychological authorities Septimus so vociferously resists as agents of "human nature."

The Inarticulate Cry: Speaking the Unspeakable Body

The perpetual remembrance that Septimus and his fellow shell-shock sufferers require, invoked so powerfully by the philanthropic agencies as a rationale for the supportive care of veterans, also authorizes their frequently involuntary cooptation into the medico-legal regime insofar as perpetual remembrance, born of trauma, constitutes an act of disproportion. While remembrance and other works of mourning function in post-war Briton to unite citizens and to

discharge grief and fear, the excess of remembrance as exemplified by the shell-shocked veteran undermines, rather than advances, the work of mourning. Rather than finding the communal bonds strengthened between him and his fellow Britons, Septimus' pathological remembrances isolate him, as he turns inward to a war narrative of Edwards which his fellow mourners can neither understand nor share. This frustration of the project of collective meaning—and myth—making marks Septimus out as a perpetual other whose ineradicable difference will lead ultimately to his scapegoating. In his study of group formation, Freud, after le Bon, notes that the homogenizing impulses of the nascent group will often lead to the discharging of primitive and frequently violent tendencies against the inassimilable one.

While Gordon argues that Septimus' status as scapegoat and his subsequent suicide functions in a positive way as an act of successful and, significantly, transgressive communication across time and space with Clarissa, it must nevertheless be noted that the success of Septimus' speech/act is still predicated upon his death. Moreover, while Septimus does seem to be at least momentarily understood and empathized with by Clarissa, he remains subject to the interpretations of the social body, his acts situated within the grand narratives of his time. For Holmes and Bradshaw, the medical authorities whose declarations carry prodigious weight in medicalized modernity, Septimus' suicide is the predictable outcome of pathological disproportion. For Peter, the ambivalent imperialist, Septimus' act galvanizes the rescue efforts which emblematize the wonders of modern British civilization. Even for Clarissa, Septimus' foil, the suicide revitalizes and affirms Clarissa's project, reigniting her determination to "combine, to create."

Like the war wounded and dead, the division Septimus sowed in life is transmuted to unification in his death through a shared project of meaning-making. That different characters

would ascribe diverse meanings to Septimus' death does not undermine the identity-re/formation at play here insofar as the constellation of interpretations assigned to Septimus' death conforms to the grand narratives through which modern Britain sought to define itself. In their own turn, each character ascribes to Septimus' death meanings which authorize and catalyze post-war nationalistic paradigms, from the ascendance of the medico-judicial power/knowledge structures, to the perpetuation of the civilizing mission at home and abroad, to the formation of networks of affiliation, obligation, and care through the careful ministrations of the modern, upper-class hostess.

Septimus' suicide constitutes the domestication of a body which in life was rendered extraordinary through its incapacity to "perform" post-war British subjectivity appropriately. His disproportionate memory threatened at every turn to unsettle and undermine the community being re/formed through the act of memorialization and mourning. Such excess of memory casts Septimus beyond the boundaries of the emerging post-war collectivity and, as such, galvanizes the objectification of his body as symbol of that for which the collective must unite in grief. As the scapegoat, he can be neither the subject of nor the participant in the work of mourning but must instead be the emblem toward which these energies are directed. *Mrs. Dalloway* abounds with scenes of isolation, in which Septimus gazes at a distance on the civilization of which he is no longer a part:

> [N]ow that he was quite alone, condemned, deserted, as those who are about to die are alone, there was a luxury in it, an isolation full of sublimity; a freedom which the attached could never know. Holmes had won, of course; the brute with the red nostrils had won. But even Holmes himself could not touch this last relic straying on the edge of the world, this outcast, who gazed back at the inhabited regions, who lay, like a drowned sailor, on the shore of the world. (103)

The luxurious detachment of the condemned that Septimus savors as the last refuge from the contamination of human nature in the form of Holmes is articulated at greater length in Woolf's intensely personal long essay, *On Being Ill.* Here, Woolf asserts what can only be gestured at in this novel whose project is the re/formulation of community: the perspective of the inassimilable other, the subjective (and profoundly embodied) experience of the outsider whose individuality cannot be subsumed beneath or into the identity the collective. In her essay, Woolf describes the isolation of the ill, who, cut off from the rush and ramble of modern bourgeois life, experience an internal and external reality unimaginable to the collective. This internal reality, of course, is the experience of the mind and body in pain and weakness, verities which industrialized capitalism would deny in its requirements that the human body be a reliable instrument of optimal productivity. The external reality, likewise, is an experience of the world—of the city—that the "fully functioning" cannot know—the view of the London sky blocked to passersby on the streets but in full view of the supine patient at her window; the shadows the sunlight casts at hours of the day when the man or woman of business would not be home to see them.

Thus, despite Woolf's attestations in "Modern Fiction" to the preeminence of the consciousness in modernist literature, as Gordon notes, Woolf's latter works in particular are profoundly situated within the body. Most important for the purposes of this study is the fact that Woolf situates the occasion and the creation of the scapegoat squarely within the boundaries of his/her abject body. Disproportion, as exemplified through embodied signs, activates the casting off of the extraordinary body in the face of community efforts to define itself through what it is not. The body described in *On Being Ill* is a body "othered" through sickness. Here, Woolf takes up the militaristic language of health that was so common in her period to describe the ill subject as a "deserter" of the battle of life. Fundamentally, for Woolf, the sick subject is one whose

physiological and/or psychological vulnerabilities render him/her unsuitable for the vicissitudes of modern life, unfit for the economic and social competition which comes from participation in contemporary capitalistic society. That such participation is obligatory, in Woolf's purview, necessitates the characterization of the isolated ill as renegade and shirker.

This iconoclastic consciousness created through such detachment, however, extends in important ways to the nature of language itself. Woolf notes in her essay that a new language is required to express the experience of illness. The cool, dispassionate discourse of Enlightenment positivism, she suggests, fails to represent adequately (or at all) the wonders and the torments of the vulnerable body. The foregrounding of the body in *Mrs. Dalloway* suggests an effort to redefine post-war community-making paradigms along a framework reminiscent of phenomenology insofar as the nationalist alliance of individual selves would be necessity recognize and accommodate the inter-dynamics of embodied consciousness in the construction of the self and of a language capable of representing this new vision of the self. Even more significant, as Gordon notes, is that, for Woolf, the fluidity and reciprocity of thought and perception would extend far beyond the individual subject, uniting bodies and minds in a fibrous network of thought, feeling, and sensation. Like the body in pain's cry for a new language, the affiliated, communal body supersedes rational (Enlightenment) discourse, resembling more the *jouissance* of the mother/female than the Word of the Father. Gordon argues that the inarticulate cry, rather than the spoken word, is cornerstone of this new discourse of embodied plurality.

However, the utopian ideal of community-making as first envisioned by Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway* and more fully developed in Woolf's later, more experimental works cannot ultimately escape the contexts of its time. Gordon asserts that the final failure to realize the communal ideal in Woolf's novels is the recognition that the inassimilable will always already be the other. The

tenets of group psychology so ubiquitous in Woolf's time were predicated upon an inevitable homogenization, an erasure of individual difference, that conditions the formation of the group. It is for this reason that Woolf so powerfully asserts in *On Being Ill* that the body "intervenes" and that the cry of a fevered brain will supersede articulate declarations of love from a dear one, that the demands of a headache will weigh more heavily than the bonds of familial obligation.

Thus, the amorphous and unpredictable body in pain is also in the final analysis an incomprehensible body, as inarticulate as its cry. The failure of Woolf's ideal community rests upon the same conditions which activate the othering of the extraordinary body—the ultimate frustration of communication. The inarticulate cry is always already abortive, foreclosing rather than furthering understanding and connection.

Therefore, though there are undoubtedly moments in Woolf's oeuvre which would seem to celebrate the sumptuous isolation of the unattached, *Mrs. Dalloway*, like *On Being Ill,* remains highly cognizant of the consequences of being "superfluous" and incomprehensible in industrial modernity. Septimus' inability to assimilate into and communicate properly with the nascent community being formed in post-war Britain justifies and requires his instrumentalization as a scapegoat, catalyzing Clarissa's efforts "to combine, to create."

Significantly, the problematization of the role of the incomprehensible, inassimilable one is not only evident in the character of Septimus, but also in his foil, Clarissa. Time and again, the novel expresses a tension between invisibility and visibility in regard to Clarissa, linking this in important ways with a fundamental inability to express both the realities of the embodied self and the subjectivity housed within its shell. In the novel's opening scene, Clarissa alternates between a sense of rapture in the rush and flow of London life and despair at the sense of her waning share in that rush:

> [O]ften now this body she wore (she stopped now to look at a Dutch picture), this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing—nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway. (9)

Rau argues that this powerful scene not only exemplifies what Teresa Fulkner has described as the "menopausal epiphany" but that it also demonstrates a fundamental division between the mind and the body:

> Mainstream culture deems the middle-aged woman a nonentity in a sea of inconspicuous, anonymous bodies because it still defines femininity through youth and sexual availability. However, this menopausal epiphany does not fully explain the oddity of the first sentence….In fact, the sentence suggests a cleft between the life of the mind and the life of the body. (128)

Rau goes on in her discussion to explore Molly Hite's argument that Woolf's oeuvre centers upon the construction of two bodies: the social body and the visionary body (Rau 131). As Rau explains, the social body is that which is culturally constructed, encompassing the functions, desires, and motivations demanded of it in the construction of the ideal community. The social body, therefore, is the body sacrificed to and subsumed by the collective identity. That this social body plays a preeminent role in *Mrs. Dalloway* is exemplified in the scene in which Clarissa watches herself in her mirror as she dresses for her party:

> That was her self when some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew the parts together, she alone knew how different, how incompatible and composed so for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing-room and made a meeting point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to. (40)

It is precisely this construction of the proper social body which Septimus himself cannot achieve and which, therefore, both justifies and necessitates his scapegoating.

Significantly, Septimus's suicide, his scapegoating, functions for Clarissa as an instrument for the construction of the visionary body Hite describes. When the Bradshaws discuss Septimus's suicide at her party, Clarissa's immediate reaction his highly physical:

> Always her body went through it first, when she was told, suddenly, of an accident; her dress flamed, her body burnt. He had thrown himself from a window. Up had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes. There he lay with a thud, thud, thud in his brain, and then a suffocation of blackness. So she saw it. (207-208)

Septimus' suicide enables for Clarissa the experience of a visionary body which is excessive, transgressive, and inassimilable. Septimus's suicide situates his body as superfluous, an object to be "flung away" as Clarissa had once flung the shilling into the Serpentine. Unlike Clarissa's own body, which had been instrumentalized through marriage and motherhood, Septimus's act had been an affirmation of the excess of his body, an excess that Clarissa had denied in eschewing her attraction to Sally, which would have foreclosed the ultimate purpose of the woman's body—motherhood—rendering it superfluous. As the party continues, Clarissa finds a private room where she reflects on Septimus's suicide and her thoughts discharge her joy in the visionary body, for which Septimus's body has served as a proxy:

> [S]he did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour…she did not pity him, with all this going on….But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him—the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. He made her feel the beauty, made her feel the fun. But she must go back. She must assemble. (210)

That Clarissa's last thought, after the very sensory pleasure that his act had made her feel, is that she must rejoin her party, "must assemble," is telling. The visionary body is the very body which

prohibits such assembly, which explodes efforts "to combine, to create." In its individuality, it is profoundly atomistic, breaking apart that which would coalesce. While Victorian and fin-de-siècle literature deployed extraordinary, "monstrous," bodies to project and absorb pervasive cultural questions, fears, and desires, medicalized modernity demanded instead the construction of just such a "visionary" body, existing in the abstraction of the mind's eye and, perhaps, in fleeting glimpses of and vicarious experiences through the materiality of the inassimilable other. As Septimus's suicide and Clarissa and the others' responses to it demonstrate, however, the function of the extraordinary body in modernity is achieved only through its removal: whether through "rehabilitation," institutionalization, or death, the visibility of the extraordinary body is of necessity brief, its function irrevocably imposed from without and contingent upon the extinction which will make the creation of the "normative" community possible.

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UP, 1995. Print.

VITA

Terri Beth Miller was born in Johnson City, TN, to parents, Terry and Linda Miller. She is an only child. Terri Beth graduated *summa cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts in English degree from Tusculum College in Greeneville, TN. From there, Terri Beth relocated to Charlottesville, VA, where she earned her Master of Arts in English degree from the University of Virginia. After the M.A., Terri Beth returned home to Tennessee, accepting a position as a Graduate Teaching Associate at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she will earn her Ph.D. in English in May 2013. Her areas of specialization include British modernism, disability studies, postcolonial studies, and rhetoric, writing, and composition (RWL).